THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY IN HANS FALLADA'S SOCIALLY CRITICAL NOVELS

by

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY IN HANS FALLADA'S SOCIALLY CRITICAL NOVELS submitted by Margaret Foot in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

Apart from the many interpretations biased by the allegiance of their writers to ideologies such as National Socialism and Communism, there are two main divisions in the critical reception of Hans Fallada's works. His realistic presentation of life in his own times was stressed and praised by contemporary reviewers, although they usually did not elaborate on the elements that contributed to this realism, except to emphasize that Fallada reproduced with vivid accuracy the way that people really spoke and behaved. The other group maintains that Fallada's approach to writing was too subjective for his novels to present a realistic picture of contemporary society, and that the central point of interest in his works is a study of the individual characters he creates, a study of their psychological make-up.

What these latter studies overlook, however, is that the individual and the society he lives in are inextricably bound up together. What the one does affects the other. What the one is, is a product or cause of the other. In Fallada's novels we always see the individual in his relationships with others, and from this we can deduce truths not only about the individual himself, but also about the society he lives in.

The first chapter of this thesis deals with the Objectivist elements in Hans Fallada's socially critical

novels, elements which heighten the realism of his works. The subsequent chapters examine the individual's relationship with society, with his peers and the interrelationship of these two spheres, showing that certain aspects of the "little man's" own nature helped to perpetuate the sort of system that exploited him. Close analysis of the primary texts shows that the fate of the individual and the mode of society he lives in are inextricably bound up together. Each is to some extent responsible for the other. The findings of this thesis lead to the conclusion that, with the possible exception of family love and warmth, the lack of altruism in the "small man's" relationships is indicative of the waning of humanistic idealism in the lower middle class.

The novels dealt with are those that concentrate on the social situation of the petit-bourgeois in Fallada's times: Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, Kleiner Mann, was nun?, Wer einmal aus dem Blechnapf frißt, Wolf unter Wölfen, and Der Trinker.

The bibliography, which contains a number of reviews representative of the reception of Fallada's works at various times both in Germany and abroad, including some interesting articles and reviews of novels not dealt with in detail in this thesis, is more comprehensive than any so far published.

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INTRODUCTION

Although a large reading public has always greeted Hans Fallada's works with enthusiasm, these same books have been accorded a mixed and fluctuating reception by literary critics and reviewers. The reasons for this stem from the political situation at the times when Fallada's works have appeared, times that include at least sections of three distinct historical eras: pre-1933, the Weimar Republic; 1933-1945, the Nazi era; and finally post 1945. The reception of his works was and still is often determined by the various ideologies that have held sway, particularly in Germany, during these years.

The two major novels that Fallada wrote and published before the Nazis came into power were accorded an almost unanimously positive and enthusiastic reception. Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben (1931) was acclaimed as a Zeitroman and as a representative work of "Neue Sachlichkeit" in its realistic portrayal of recent events. Kurt Tucholsky praised Fallada's narrative ability, his deft drawing of small-town characters and political intrigues -- in fact his facility in re-creating the whole atmosphere of a small-town community.[1]

From 1933 onwards, however, Fallada's works were to be subjected to adverse criticism by people who followed a set

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[1]"Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben," in Gesammelte Werke: 1929-1932 (Stuttgart, Hamburg: Deutscher Bücherbund, 1960), pp. 820-826.

ideology and who judged the merits and acceptability of novels in terms of the ideology to which they had sworn allegiance and not in terms of the work itself. National Socialist critics who tried to interpret Fallada's works according to the demands of National Socialism of necessity found the novels lacking, as did critics later in the DDR, who looked in vain for elements of Social Realism. Of the Nazi critics Hellmuth Langenbucher, Will Vesper and Eberhard Ter-Nedden come to mind as some who wrote particularly stringent commentaries on Fallada's works.[2] What offended them most was the lack of outspoken commitment to Nazi ideals and the lack of positive figures in Fallada's novels. The effect that their objections had on this author will be discussed more fully in Chapter III with reference to a series of articles written by Langenbucher.

Fallada survived Hitler's regime by only two years, but his works have once again -- this time posthumously -- been subjected to a criticism largely guided by the demands of an ideology. There has been much interest in his works in the DDR, even to the extent that at least two modern playwrights (Claus Hammel and Helmut Müller) have adapted his novels as plays, but as mentioned above, many critics of the DDR, (Dieter Noll, Waltraut Schiller, I.M. Lange and Hans-Jürgen Geerdts),[3] try to interpret his works in the light of Social

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[2]See the bibliography for articles written by these critics.

[3]See the bibliography.

Realism, using criteria which simply do not apply to these works. More enlightened critics from the DDR, however (e.g. Ruth Römer)[4] see that Fallada should be valued for what he did do -- for his portrayal of the lower middle class, rather than that he should be criticized for his neglect of the revolutionary working class.

Biographical data and historical background information are adequately treated by Jürgen Manthey, Theodor Lemmer and GÜnter Caspar.[5] In addition to his informative epilogues, Caspar also gives interesting information about differences between Fallada's original manuscripts and the printed editions of his works.

Douglas Wiley Crow professes to see some radical change in Fallada's view of the relationship between the individual and society in this author's works. If one, however, takes into account the constraints placed on Fallada by adverse circumstances as indicated in Chapter III of this thesis, his depiction of the lack of altruism prevalent in his times is in fact consistent throughout the major works. Unfortunately, one finds in Crow's dissertation mistakes in detail of a nature that suggests superficial reading of the primary texts. He states, for instance, that Pinneberg in the end "limits

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[4]See the bibliography.

[5]See the bibliography.

his sphere of activity to stealing wood."[6] Admittedly, Pinneberg would like to join the wood thieves, but Lämmchen firmly rejects the idea, as she clings desperately to the last semblance they have of respectability.[7] Considering that this is a main issue in Kleiner Mann, was nun?, it is a somewhat crass error on Crow's part.

Royal Lilburn Tinsley denies the importance of Fallada's conception of social forces, and maintains that a study of the individual is of central interest.[8] In this he joins Jürgen Manthey, who indicates in his monograph on Fallada the extent to which auto-biographical details coloured the author's character sketches. Some of the ideas in this thesis are also touched upon by Tinsley, but he takes a different basic approach, studying the characteristics of the "small man" portrayed by Fallada, but Tinsley does not then draw conclusions about the interrelationships between man and society.

This thesis shows, by close analysis of the texts, that the fate of the individual and the mode of society he lives in are inextricably bound up together. Each is to some extent a product of the other. Chapter I examines the objective elements in Fallada's novels which connect him

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[6] "The Individual vs. Authority" (Diss., Louisiana State University, 1971), p. 34.

[7] Hans Fallada, Kleiner Mann, was nun? (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1965), pp. 221-225.

[8] "Hans Fallada's Concept of the Nature of the 'Little Man'" (Diss., Tulane University, 1965).

with the literary movement of "Neue Sachlichkeit", and which heighten the realism of his depiction of the times. This is intended to support the analysis, in the subsequent chapters, of Fallada's view of society, showing in advance that he did make definite and recognizable efforts to portray the social system of his time realistically. Chapter II defines Fallada's concept of the forces of society, and Chapter III shows the extent to which the ordinary man is subjected to these. Chapter IV then examines elements in the "small man's" nature that make him so prone to exploitation and that of themselves help to perpetuate this exploitation.

The novels included in this discussion are those that concentrate on the social situation of the petit-bourgeois in Fallada's times. Fallada's first four major works are dealt with: Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben (1931), Kleiner Mann, was nun? (1932), Wer einmal aus dem Blechnapf frißt (1934), and Wolf unter Wölfen (1937). Wolf unter Wölfen is the last book dealt with from the Nazi period, as even this novel shows the effects of Fallada's reaction to previous adverse criticism on the part of the Nazis. Fallada's other works during the Nazi era reveal the stunting and debilitating influence of the circumstances he lived in. He carefully avoided social criticism on the whole, and wrote children's stories, works of a fairy-tale nature or

books of reminiscences about his own life. Der Trinker (1944) is also included in this study as the last major work which sprang from Fallada's own creative impulse.

CHAPTER I

ELEMENTS OF OBJECTIVISM IN FALLADA'S NOVELS[1]

The aim of examining the objective elements in Fallada's works is to try and define more precisely whether his works are primarily documents of his times or rather reflections of his own personal problems. Many critics tend to support the latter theory to such an extent that they reject Fallada's narrative as a realistic description of contemporary life. One must always keep in mind that the novels contain a wealth of autobiographical detail, but this does not necessarily detract from the realism of the works. After all, the author himself with all his weaknesses and human failings was a product of the times too. Many of the trials he had to endure were imposed by the social situation that prevailed during his lifetime.

It must be stressed that the contemplation of these objective elements is by no means an attempt to classify Fallada as a writer of "Neue Sachlichkeit", but rather to show that he strove to present a realistic picture of contemporaneous life.

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[1] "Objectivism" is a term used by Helmut Gruber in preference to other translations for "Neue Sachlichkeit". See Helmut Gruber, "'Neue Sachlichkeit' and the World War," German Life and Letters, XX (1967), 138.

"Neue Sachlichkeit" was a term first applied to a development in the visual arts in the 1920's. The expression was formulated by Hartlaub, the director of the art gallery in Halle. Oskar Beyer in 1929 described the traits of "Neue Sachlichkeit" as reflected in photography:

> Man will sachlich arbeiten, wissenschaftlich, dinglichkeitsklärend und -ergründend vorgehen, wie der medizinische (beinah: der mikroskopische) Photograph es ohne sonderliche, künstlerische Ambition schon vorher tat.[2]

Photography became the "Ausdruck eines neuen Sehens".[3] This new way of seeing, "Neue Sachlichkeit", entailed a precise representation of unadorned fact, a representation which, uncoloured by the personality of the artist, would reach an extreme of objectivity.

This concept was adopted in literary circles of the 20's as an alternative to and in reaction against the over-emotionalism of the Expressionists. According to Horst Denkler the movement was short-lived and its popularity had already declined by the early 30's.[4] Indeed because of its rigidity in its extreme form as outlined above by Oskar Beyer, "Neue Sachlichkeit" could not hope to hold sway for long, but elements of it, combined with other artistic methods, still

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[2]Excerpts from an article originally published in Eckart, VI/VII (1930-1931) are printed in "Echo der Zeitschriften," Die Literatur, XXXII (1929-1930), 711.

[3]Beyer, Die Literatur, XXXII, 711.

[4]"Sache und Stil," Wirkendes Wort, XVII (1968), 167.

persisted long after the 20's, as is evidenced by Fallada's works. Traits of "Neue Sachlichkeit" may be more readily demonstrated with reference to the earlier novels Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben (1931) and Kleiner Mann (1932), but there is nevertheless still evidence of them in the later novels too.

Heinz Kindermann distinguishes between "radikale" and "idealistische Sachlichkeit".[5] The radical Objectivists were those who portrayed only "things" and who acknowledged the elements of life only in so far as they were objects. In their desire to portray life exactly as it was, they ignored causality and refused to prognosticate possible future change. The idealistic Objectivists, however, recognized that feelings are also a part of life and included man's hopes and aspirations in their works.

Of the Objectivists' style as a whole Kindermann maintained that "Realismus ist die künstlerische Signatur ihrer sachlichen Grundhaltung" and that their works display "recht zeitbewußte, notbewußte, erdnahe Züge".[6] The latter are reflected in the themes that authors of the time chose to deal with, and in the fact that the content of the works was more important to them than the form. The topicality of the subject matter is one of the most striking

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[5]"Vom Wesen der 'Neuen Sachlichkeit'," Jahrbuch des Freien Deutschen Hochstifts, 1930, p. 355.

[6]"Idealismus und Sachlichkeit in der deutschen Gegenwartsdichtung," Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift, XXI (1933), 93.

characteristics of Fallada's novels, as a review of those novels under discussion here shows.

In Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben (1931) the author based the underlying plot of the novel on actual events, a peasants' uprising in Schleswig-Holstein, which took place in 1929. Fallada had intimate knowledge of the course of events there as he wrote several articles on them for various newspapers.[7] Kleiner Mann, published in 1932, deals with the effects of mass unemployment, a crisis which actually did reach a peak in the first months of 1932 and again of 1933 with over 6,000,000 unemployed.[8] Blechnapf, completed in 1933 and published in 1934, although expounding a universal and timeless theme -- that of the re-integration of released prisoners into society -- is again set in the Germany of the early 30's. Wolf unter Wölfen (1937) in dealing with the Inflation of the 20's took up the discussion of as recent a crisis in German history as was possible under the ever-watchful and harshly censorious eye of the National Socialist authorities. Der Trinker, written secretly in 1944 during the author's internment in a mental institution, is on one level of understanding a more personal document of Fallada's

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[7] See: i) "Bauern-Krieg wider Neumünster," Das Tage-Buch, X (1929), 1516-1519.
ii) "Landvolkprozeß," Das Tage-Buch, X (1929), 2007-2008.
iii) "Landvolkprozeß," Weltbühne, XXV (1929), 832-835.
iv) See also an anonymous article, which has however been accredited to Fallada: "Die schwarze Bauernfahne," Das Tage-Buch, X (1929), 1311-1315.

[8] See Alan Bullock, Hitler, a Study in Tyranny (London: Cox and Wyman, 1967), p. 152.

own problems, on another level, however, as will be discussed more fully later, it reflects the final isolation of man in the cruel society that held sway in the Germany of 1944.

The problem of how to maintain an existence on slender means is one with which almost all of Fallada's main characters have to cope at one time or another. It is a theme dictated by the times Fallada lived in and portrayed, and one which appears in many of his works. Whereas we encounter Wolfgang Pagel and Petra Ledig in conditions of extreme indigence at the beginning of Wolf unter Wölfen, the problem of a low income and the threat of complete poverty dominates the lives of the Pinnebergs in Kleiner Mann and to some extent of Tredup and his family in Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben. It is initially because of financial difficulties that Erwin Sommer turns to alcohol for comfort, financial stress aggravates the farmers of Altholm into revolt, and on the very first page of Blechnapf the threat of financial need is mentioned:

> "Wenn Werner heute nicht schreibt," denkt er, "muß ich zum Pfaffen gehen und betteln, daß sie mich in das Heim aufnehmen. Wohin soll ich sonst? Über dreihundert Mark macht mein Arbeitsverdienst sicher nicht. Die sind bald alle."[9]

The urgency and insistence with which this problem occurs as a theme in Fallada's works indicate to what extent it constituted one of the main dilemmas of the common man.

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[9]Hans Fallada, Wer einmal aus dem Blechnapf frißt (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1964), p. 5.

As far as the content of these novels is concerned then, Kindermann's evaluation can obviously be applied with some validity, for they are certainly "zeitbewußt" and "notbewußt".

To return to Kindermann's contention that realism sets the basic artistic tone of works of "Neue Sachlichkeit", various articles on this movement draw attention to certain stylistic devices which authors employed to achieve this realism. Many of these and other general facets of Objectivism can be demonstrated with reference to Fallada's works.

Kindermann points out that most of the characters in Objectivist works are inhabitants of large cities, and indeed we observe many of Fallada's characters in their struggle to lead a decent life in the city.[10] Both Gruber and Denkler mention the debasement of language as an aspect of "Neue Sachlichkeit", which illustrates the authors' attempts to obtain the utmost credibility in their portrayal of the life of their characters.[11] Fallada uses elements of colloquial language, dialect and slang to sharpen the contours of his realistic character sketches. This is a particularly noticeable facet of his works, as much of his prose is written in dialogue form, which again brings the reader very close to the fictional characters.

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[10] Kindermann, Jahrbuch des Freien Deutschen Hochstifts, 1930, p. 366.

[11] See Gruber, German Life and Letters, XX, 138; and Denkler, Wirkendes Wort, XVII, 179.

Reviewers of Fallada's novels, especially his own contemporaries in Germany, have often extolled the author's facility in reproducing everyday colloquial speech and thus heightening the authenticity of his characters and their setting. Kurt Tucholsky for example said of Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben:

> Was vor allem auffällt, ist die Echtheit des Jargons. Das kann man nicht erfinden, das ist gehört. Und bis auf das letzte Komma richtig wiedergegeben: es gibt eine Echtheit, die sich sofort überträgt: man fühlt, daß die Leute so gesprochen haben und nicht anders.[12]

Heinrich Goeres, reviewing the re-issue of Wolf unter Wölfen in Eastern Germany, commented that "...verständliche, volkstümliche Sprache, Fülle und Echtheit der Figuren sind seine Vorzüge, die ihn auch heute zu einem lesenswerten Buch machen."[13] Kurt Person gives us a further example when he says of Kleiner Mann that it "...läßt die Menschen sprechen und handeln, wie sie wirklich sind."[14]

In general then Fallada creates a realistic impression by letting his characters speak in colloquial, even vulgar terms, but he also achieves very diverse effects by using language in different ways. First, however, let us look at

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[12]"Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben," in Gesammelte Werke: 1929-1932 (Stuttgart, Hamburg: Deutscher Bücherbund, 1960), p. 823.

[13]"Fallada und seine Grenzen," Neue Welt, 1950, p. 137.

[14]Review of "Kleiner Mann, was nun?" in: Der Romanführer, ed. Johannes Beer, III (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1952), 187.

some examples of how the atmosphere and milieu people lived in are conjured up by their speech.

The scene is often set by the use of dialect as in the case of Frau Thumann, otherwise known as Pottmadamm, in Wolf unter Wölfen:

> Ick weeß, unser junger Herr, der de kleene blasse Dunkle hat, sie is aber nich seine Frau, bloß, sie bildt sich ein, sie wird's, und manchen schmeckt ja so'ne Inbildung wie uns Kuchen von Hilbrichen, der nennt mich imma Pottmadamm.[15]

and later:

> Denn wenn man jung is, jloobt man jar nischt, nischt an de Pfaffen, was ich ooch nich tue, un nich an de Baktzillen.[16]

These words spoken in a dialect, immediately recognizable by the long "e" sound instead of the dipthong "ei" (weeß/weiß) and by the "j" sound instead of "g" (jar/gar) as the dialect of Berlin, conjures up pictures of the social class and milieu which we find represented in Heinrich Zille's drawings.[17] Frau Thumann does in fact typify the common uneducated inhabitant of Berlin. She also lives in surroundings similar to those we see in Zille's "Milljöh" and her speech habits simply set the seal on Fallada's realistic portrayal of this character.

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[15]Hans Fallada, Wolf unter Wölfen (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1952), p. 28.

[16]Fallada, Wolf unter Wölfen, p. 28.

[17]See for example Heinrich Zille, Das dicke Zillebuch, ed. Gerhard Flügge (Berlin: Eulenspiegel, n.d.).

Stuff too is well characterized by his crude manner of speaking, evoking the image of a blunt, callous and disillusioned editor in a second-rate, small-town newspaper office. The following excerpts from Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben are typical statements of his:

> Anmisten tät ich ihn brennend gerne.[18]
>
> Äh, scheiß! Werde ich meinen Riemen schreiben.[19]
>
> Warum auch nicht? Mir haben sie gesagt, er hat den ganzen Mist angerührt. Ich werde ihn ausschmieren, den Schleimscheißer, den elenden![20]

Another aspect of the colloquial language of Fallada's personages which helps to create the atmosphere of the times is the wealth of words that were fashionable during the 20's and the 30's, but which are no longer so. We find several examples of this in Blechnapf: meschugge[21], stiekum[22]. Also in this novel we find that Fallada uses variations in speech patterns to distinguish between various social levels. Whilst he is free, Kufalt speaks a reasonably jargon-free German, but on his return to prison or when he meets up again with a former fellow inmate he readily adopts gaol

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[18]Hans Fallada, Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, in Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben, ed. Günter Caspar (Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1971), p. 19.

[19]Fallada, Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, p. 24.

[20]Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, p. 208.

[21]Fallada, Blechnapf, p. 9.

[22]Blechnapf, p. 10.

slang again: "Er sagt, er wirft dabei einen Blick auf das Fenster der Wache, hinter dem man einen Schupo sieht: 'Kippe oder Lampen!'"[23] This oft repeated phrase means that the person addressed must share the possession or information in question (Kippe machen) or be betrayed to the authorities (Lampen machen).

In the case of Geheimrat von Teschow in Wolf unter Wölfen colloquial language is used consciously and with a specific purpose in mind. The Geheimrat is a sly and fickle character who uses all possible means to cheat everyone he knows and turn all situations to his own advantage. That he acts in a manner of exaggerated friendliness towards von Studmann and Pagel is part of his scheme to trick them into trusting him, so that he can use them in his vendetta against his son-in-law. Although he is in fact hard and unscrupulous, or rather because of this, he wishes to appear jovial and harmless. He acts the part of a "fröhlicher Greis" as Pagel calls him.[24] His colloquial tone is simply a feature of this façade, as it breaks down the barriers imposed by class differences between himself and those he deals with, creating an illusion of equality.

Petra Ledig's attitude towards the spoken language reflects the impression it makes in general. We see how important she feels good speech habits to be when she equates

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[23] Blechnapf, p. 221.

[24] Fallada, Wolf unter Wölfen, p. 339.

speaking correctly with the respectability she longs for. The importance she attaches to this is revealed indirectly to us when Wolf wonders why she is so grateful to him: "Was habe ich denn eigentlich für sie getan?' dachte er betreten. 'Ihr beigebracht, wie man Messer und Gabel hält -- und richtiges Deutsch.'"[25]

Fallada consciously uses different levels of language to achieve varying effects as we have just seen by examining the mode of speech of some of his characters. There are also elements of reportage in his novels, which add to the realism of his narrative, since they give the impression of being an excerpt from a newspaper in real life which has been incorporated into the text. In Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben Fallada exploited fully his experience as a reporter; this we can see by comparing the demands of the fictional Pomeranian farmers with those made by the farmers of Neumünster as reported by Fallada in a newspaper article. The peasants in the novel make the following demands:

> Zum ersten: ehrenvolle Rückgabe der Fahne.
> Zum zweiten: sofortige Dienstentlassung der Schuldigen Frerksen und Gareis.
> Zum dritten: strafrechtliche Verurteilung der Polizeibeamten, die mit der blanken Waffe gegen die Bauern vorgegangen sind.
> Zum vierten: eine lebenslängliche, auskömmliche Pension für die verletzten Bauern.
> Zum fünften: eine einmalige Geldbuße von zehntausend Mark.[26]

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[25] Wolf unter Wölfen, p. 35.

[26] Fallada, Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, p. 295.

The demands of the farmers as reported by Fallada on 14th September 1929 in Das Tage-Buch were as follows:

1. Ehrende und offizielle Übergabe der Fahne.
2. Buße von 10,000 RM. (Privatrechtliche Forderungen vorbehalten.)
3. Angemessene lebenslängliche Pension für den verletzten Fahnenträger.
4. Verurteilung des Polizeidezernenten durch öffentliche Kundgebung.[27]

A comparison of the two sets of stipulations reveals that Fallada changed very little of what happened in reality. In Heute bei uns zu Haus he expands on his former intentions to be as objective as possible whilst writing Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben. Referring to his experiences in Neumünster, which he calls Altholm in the novel, he says:

> Oh, ich hatte meinen Stoff, ich hatte in Altholm so einiges gesehen, erlebt, gehört. Ich fing an, einen Roman zu schreiben, des Titels "Ein kleiner Zirkus namens Monte".
>
> Ich schrieb mit tausend Zweifeln, oft ganz mutlos. Ich hatte es mir technisch so schwierig wie nur möglich gemacht. Nach meinen ungeliebten Erstlingen, die gar zu persönlich gewesen waren, sollte der Autor diesmal im Buch ganz fehlen.[28]

Of course the author can never be entirely missing from his works: even if he takes existing written material such as

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[27] Hans Fallada, "Bauern-Krieg wider Neumünster," Das Tage-Buch, X (1929), 1518.

[28] Hans Fallada, Heute bei uns zu Haus (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1966), p. 23. The "Erstlinge" which Fallada here refers to are Der junge Goedeschal (1918) and Anton und Gerda (1918), two early Expressionistic novels which the author later rejected and withdrew from circulation.

excerpts from newspaper articles, prison rules, advertisements and does not alter it, nevertheless he has to select it. By the very choice of material he opts to present, the author of necessity colours the picture of reality that he offers us. However, a closer proximity to reality can be achieved by the montage of elements of reportage and factual data into the text. These passages, although chosen by the author, are taken straight from life and are not products of the novelist's imagination. They therefore bring an added touch of realism to the narrative.

The following excerpts from other novels of Fallada further illustrate his application of this stylistic device.

Under the guise of the Pinnebergs' budget for a month Fallada gives us some facts about the financial difficulties facing the petit-bourgeois in the 20's:

A. EINNAHMEN:

Gehalt pro Monat brutto 200.-RM.

B. AUSGABEN:

a. Lebensmittel:

Butter und Margarine 10.-
Eier 4.-
Gemüse 8.-
Fleisch 12.-

and so it continues until it reaches the sad conclusion:

Gesamtausgaben 196.-RM
Bleibt Bestand ..... 4.-RM[29]

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[29]Hans Fallada, Kleiner Mann, was nun? (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1965), p. 130.

One page of factual details presented in this way not only draws the attention of the reader because of its unusual format, but in its directness it also illustrates more forcefully the Pinnebergs' dilemma than several pages of fictional discussion about the problems, frustrations and hardships of poverty might have done. With this method of presenting facts Fallada goes right to the heart of the matter.

The pages of Blechnapf give us a further example of how Fallada confronts us with the harshness of the world by incorporating facts into his works. Having accompanied Kufalt through all of his trials and tribulations, the rights and wrongs of which are not to be discussed at this point, the reader is startled by the harsh, impersonal tone of the reality that now faces Kufalt. His deeds now become paragraphs in the "Staatliches Gesetzbuch":

> "1. 14-15 'selbständige' Handtaschendiebstähle, da der Täter jedesmal neu den Entschluß zu einer Wegnahme faßt..."
> ..." §249 StGB. (Raub) und gleichzeitig § 223 StGB. (Körperverletzung) und zwar §223a StGB., da die Körperverletzung mittels eines hinterlistigen Überfalls begangen wurde. Der in Frage kommende Strafrahmen ist nach §73 StGB. nur aus §249 StGB. zu entnehmen. Es liegt bei Raub und Körperverletzung nur eine Handlung vor, die nur nach einem Deliktbestand zu bestrafen ist:
> 1-15 Jahre Zuchthaus, bei mildernden Umständen 6 Monate bis 5 Jahre Gefängnis."[30]

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[30] Fallada, Blechnapf, p. 380.

A further element of "Neue Sachlichkeit" which is to be found in Fallada's works is the minute, photographic detail in the description of certain objects and places. The detailed descriptions that Fallada gives of the rooms that the Pinnebergs live in are reminiscent of what Beyer said of "Neue Sachlichkeit" in photography. Fallada aims to depict everything as realistically as possible by going into great detail, thereby helping the reader to picture the Pinnebergs' environment, as a natural consequence of which he will also understand better their situation as a whole. The first room they rent is described as follows:

> Also das Zimmer ist eine Schlucht, gar nicht mal so schmal, aber endlos lang, eine Reitbahn. Und während vier Fünftel dieser Bahn ganz vollgestellt sind mit Polstermöbeln, Nußbaumtischen, Vertikos, Spiegelkonsolen, Blumenständern, Etageren, einem großen Papageienkäfig (ohne Papagei), stehen im letzten Fünftel nur zwei Betten und ein Waschtisch. Aber die Trennung zwischen dem vierten und fünften Fünftel, die ist es, die Lämmchen lockt. Es ist eine Scheidung herbeigeführt zwischen Wohn- und Schlafgemach, aber mit keiner Rabitzwand, mit keinem Vorhang, mit keiner spanischen Wand. Sondern - also mit Leisten ist so eine Art Spalier gemacht, eine Art Weingeländer vom Boden bis zur Decke mit einem Bogen, durch den man gehen kann. Und diese Leisten sind nicht etwa einfache Holzleisten, sondern schön gebeizte Nußbaumleisten, jede mit fünf parallelen Riefen in sich. Aber daß das Spalier nicht so nackt aussähe, sind Blumen hineingewunden, Blumen aus Papier und Stoff, Rosen und Narzissen und Veilchentuffs. Und dann sind da lange grüne Papiergirlanden, die man von den Bockbierfesten her kennt.[31]

The humorous undertone in this passage is unmistakeable. In this context Ernst Heilborn noted: "Damit wäre aus der

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[31]Fallada, Kleiner Mann, pp. 28-29.

Detailgebung auf die Milieuschilderung hingewiesen: grau und doch farbig."[32] Although there is a pessimistic strain, the milieu is still colourful. Kindermann writes of the general pessimistic tone in works of "Neue Sachlichkeit" saying:

> Und die radikal-sachliche Dichtung sieht nun alles grau in grau, sieht überall nur Zerstörung und Isolierung. Zynismus und grausame Ironie oder verbissene Trostlosigkeit und unrettbares Einsamkeitsbewußtsein sind ihre wichtigsten Kennzeichen ... und vorwiegend die schlimmen Seiten des Daseins ... werden ... in ausgesprochen pessimistischer Haltung gezeichnet.[33]

It has already been mentioned that Fallada's works are not to be considered as "radikal-sachlich", but nevertheless they bear some of these traits: the hopelessness of man's struggle for higher standards, the feeling of isolation and a general pessimistic undertone. Certainly many of Fallada's novels end on a pessimistic note as far as society as a whole is concerned.

In conclusion the role that elements of "Neue Sachlichkeit" play within the context of Fallada's novels should be more fully discussed. They are not, of course, used for their own sake, but always to achieve an effect, always as a means to an end. That objective elements increase the realism of a text in general has already been mentioned. Gruber maintains

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[32]"Roman der Powreteh," Die Literatur, XXXV (1932-1933), 20.

[33]Kindermann, Germanisch-Romanische Monatsschrift, XXI, 95.

that the Objectivists wished to educate and enlighten their readers by presenting them with a picture of life as it is. The author wished to show his public how to improve society, but this cannot be said to apply to Fallada, as his novels do not on the whole indicate that man had the "power to alter the institutions of society."[34]

In the context of the contemporary novel Lion Feuchtwanger wrote in 1932 that the factual details were only given to lend credibility to the characters, to further and deepen the reader's understanding of the milieu, of the life and times of the characters. He gives as an example that an Objectivist writer "schildert Ihnen etwa eine Börsenoperation nicht deshalb so minutiös, weil er Sie über diese Börsenoperation informieren will, sondern weil er Sie durch die Genauigkeit im Detail in Sicherheit wiegen will, auf daß Sie auch die nicht weiter nachprüfbaren Dinge jenseits der äußeren Realität glauben."[35] External things are described in such detail to initiate the reader, so that he will also understand what is beyond external detail, that is the emotions and reactions described. This interpretation fits Fallada's novels well. To stress the point: the description of the Pinnebergs' room was not aimed at giving the reader

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[34]Gruber, German Life and Letters, XX, 138.

[35]Extracts from an article entitled "Historischer Roman, Roman von heute," are printed in Die Literatur, XXXIV (1931-1932), 209.

a clear picture of a place crammed with inanimate objects, but rather to facilitate an understanding of the individual through a convincing picture of his milieu, of the atmosphere he lives in.

It is then fair to conclude that despite the many autobiographical details stressed by most critics there are nevertheless sufficient objective elements in Fallada's novels to ensure that the reader gets a true impression of life in Germany from the point of view of the "little man" in the twenties and thirties.

CHAPTER II

FALLADA'S CONCEPT OF THE FORCES OF SOCIETY

Socialist critics maintain that Fallada never attained a higher level of understanding than his characters.[1] They accuse him of minimizing important issues, because he fails to comprehend the political background. Before going into details about his concept of society we must examine the basis on which this concept is founded. Fallada in fact never displays the perspicacity or sense of purpose of a politically well-educated or orientated person. His attitude towards the political and social institutions of his time was that of the masses or more specifically that of the petit-bourgeoisie. Because he shared their attitude and often their plight too, he was able to record their situation more accurately and sympathetically. How did the petit-bourgeois perceive their world, and how did others view it?

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[1] See for example:
i) Georg Piltz, "Epiker der kleinen Leute," Berliner Zeitung, 5. 2. 1952.
ii) Ruth Römer, "Dichter des kleinbürgerlichen Verfalls," Neue deutsche Literatur, V (1957), 124.
iii) Waltraut Schiller, "Hans Fallada," Der Bibliothekar, VII (1953), 887.
Whereas Waltraut Schiller criticizes Fallada harshly for his limited point of view, Georg Piltz's attitude remains non-committal, and Ruth Römer, whilst admitting that Fallada recognized his own limitations and stayed within them, finds this a praiseworthy trait.

Golo Mann gives a general picture of the situation in the 20's and 30's.[2] The Weimar Republic was a time of many crises, confusion and disorientation. The harsh demands for reparations made in the Treaty of Versailles caused many hardships for the German nation, culminating in the giddy heights of the Inflation, which was promoted and fostered by the French occupation of the Ruhr district. With the government robbed of an important source of industrial income, the German currency collapsed.

The Inflation was succeeded by a serious unemployment crisis, which caused further ineffable suffering to the German nation. The instability and incompetence of the Government aroused feelings of insecurity in the general public. Many had felt socially completely disorientated after the 1914-18 war. Whole sections of the populace had been educated towards and trained for military life, had expected to spend their lives in military service. And suddenly this option no longer existed, no alternative was provided, the place in society which had been held for them and promised to them was no longer available. As Golo Mann emphasizes, the overriding desire of the majority of Germans was to return to work and to a normal, settled pattern of life. The displaced, however, who wished only to re-establish themselves, were faced with the problem of first setting up this pattern.

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[2]Deutsche Geschichte des neunzehnten und zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1959), pp. 650-790.

The members of the petit-bourgeoisie in particular, shop-assistants and office-workers (Angestellte), suffered from feelings of insecurity. Lacking organization as a class, unsure of their own desires, values and ideals, the Angestellten were concerned only with the everyday effects of main political events and not with the mechanics of these politics. The man-in-the-street was not interested in making revolutions or changes, in swaying decisions, but rather felt that he had no powers to influence the Government, and thus in the face of so many crises and so much poverty and hopelessness he tended to regard those in political power as opponents rather than allies. His main concern was how to cope with the problems he faced from day to day. Golo Mann describes this lack of wider vision with the following words:

> Es sind nur seltene Augenblicke ... in denen politische Leidenschaft den einzelnen packt, die öffentliche Sache ihm wichtiger dünkt als die private ... So ist es nicht unter normalen Bedingungen. Da spürt der Bürger die Politik so wenig, wie der gesunde Mensch seinen eigenen Körper spürt; er weiß, daß er ihn hat, aber kümmert sich nicht darum, die Lebensfunktionen vollziehen sich von alleine.[3]

That Fallada in his perception and interpretation of the problems of the Weimar Republic did not rise above the level of the average petit-bourgeois is symptomatic of his class at that time. It is a fact that we must regard as

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[3]Mann, Deutsche Geschichte, p. 651.

given, as a necessary consequence in terms of the development of history. We must accept that he wrote as a petit-bourgeois himself, and that he was therefore able to leave us an accurate picture of the "small man" of his times: his difficulties, fears, battles and defeats, his weaknesses. In fact, he recreated the mood and atmosphere of the times with admirable accuracy.

A second task before entering into a discussion of the various aspects of Fallada's concept of society is to delineate what one regards as being a "social" rather than an "individual" conflict. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish clearly between the two, because after all society consists of individuals. For the purposes of this thesis conflicts or relationships with peers, whether at home or at work, will be regarded as belonging to the personal sphere. Social conflicts involve those whom the "kleiner Mann" regarded as being his superiors or at least as having some degree of authority over him. That naturally includes Governmental administrative boards (die Behörden), the police, employers, and those in political power.

In keeping with the petit-bourgeois attitude towards social and political institutions, Fallada's description of such -- as he sees them -- hostile forces of society usually remains vague. Specific complaints often give way to a more generalized expression of indignation, as the following words from Kleiner Mann show:

> "Aber die sagen natürlich, daß sie einen Menschen nicht dafür bezahlen, daß er nett ist, sondern daß er eben viel Hosen verkauft."
> "Das ist ja gar nicht wahr," sagt Lämmchen. "Das ist nicht wahr, Junge. Sie wollen ja doch, daß sie anständige Menschen haben. Aber was sie jetzt machen, mit den Arbeitern schon lange und mit uns nun auch, da ziehen sie lauter Raubtiere hoch und da werden sie was erleben, Junge, sage ich dir!"[4]

Pinneberg's bitterness is directed in this instance solely at his own employers, and Lämmchen's rejoinder seems initially to continue in the same vein. The words "mit den Arbeitern schon lange und mit uns nun auch" show that her accusation is a more generalized one levelled at the employer class as a whole.

Wolf unter Wölfen gives us some examples of an even less specific nature: the characters tend to find abstract, intangible causes for the hardships they encounter, causes such as the Inflation or quite simply the times they live in: "Mehr trägt der Hof nicht, Herr Leutnant, es sind schlimme Zeiten."[5] Frau Eva von Prackwitz even blames her daughter's moral and filial shortcomings on the times: "Verdorben ist sie von dieser verfluchten Zeit!"[6]

In spite of this general vagueness, certain tendencies are nevertheless discernible in Fallada's conception of society. Society is seen as (a) an impersonal machine or

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[4]Hans Fallada, Kleiner Mann, was nun? (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1965), p. 132.

[5]Hans Fallada, Wolf unter Wölfen (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1952), p. 139.

rigid system which can reject the individual or exploit him, (b) a corrupt force and (c) a hostile force impinging on man's private life.

Fallada often depicts society as a piece of machinery in its impersonality. His characters come to seem like automatons, like cogs in a clockwork apparatus in so far as they are pushed inevitably in one direction in spite of all their efforts to remain in control of their destinies. In their encounters with administrative bodies they meet with indifference, harshness and sometimes almost with antipathy.

When Pinneberg joins the masses of the unemployed he becomes aware of the insignificance of the individual in the eyes of society. He is no longer treated with the dignity and respect due to every human being with human needs but rather as a number, as a case history in a filing system. He is confronted with the rules and dictates of a system which will make no concessions and which he is obliged to fit into. It is this inflexible system which rules, not human beings. The officials who deal with Pinneberg on his visits to the Labour Exchange, they too in their function as parts of this machine, remain distant and unsympathetic -- their attitude is not humane:

> Ach, Pinneberg mag gar nicht daran denken, aber er denkt viel daran, wie er in den Monaten Juli und August von Pontius zu Pilatus gelaufen ist, um die Erlaubnis zu bekommen, von Berlin in jene Siedlung außerhalb Berlins zu verziehen, vom Arbeitsamt Berlin an das dortige Arbeitsamt überwiesen zu werden.
> "Nur, wenn Sie nachweisen können, daß Sie dort Aussicht auf Arbeit haben, sonst nehmen die Sie nicht."

> Nein, das kann er nicht. "Aber ich kriege hier ja auch keine Arbeit!"
> "Das wissen Sie nicht. Jedenfalls sind Sie hier arbeitslos geworden und nicht dort."
> "Aber ich spare dreißig Mark Miete im Monat."
> "Damit hat das nichts zu tun. Das geht uns nichts an."
> "Aber der Wirt hier wirft mich raus!"
> "Dann besorgt Ihnen die Stadt eine andere Wohnung. Sie brauchen sich nur auf der Polizei als obdachlos zu melden."
> "Aber ich habe sogar Land bei der Laube! Ich könnte mir mein Gemüse selbst bauen und meine Kartoffeln!"
> "Laube -- das wissen Sie ja wohl, daß es gesetzlich verboten ist, in Lauben zu wohnen?!"
> Also, es ist nichts zu machen.[7]

The phrase "von Pontius zu Pilatus gelaufen" evokes not only the hopelessness of Pinneberg's efforts, but also a picture of his running from one point to another and back again, without changing or gaining anything, just like a part in a machine which is designed solely to keep the machinery running. The indifference of the officials to the individual's plight reflects the unbending attitude and the unfeelingness of the authorities. A machine knows no sentiment. In the same episode Fallada emphasizes the fact that Pinneberg's situation is not an individual tragedy, but rather that he is a representative of the many: "Er ist drin in diesem Betrieb, einer von sechs Millionen, schiebt er sich an den Schaltern vorbei, warum sich aufregen? Zehntausenden geht es schlimmer..."[8] The word "Betrieb", used as a term to

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[7]Fallada, Kleiner Mann, p. 232.

[8]Kleiner Mann, p. 232.

cover the misfortune of millions of people, immediately strikes the reader as being somewhat detached and impersonal.

Other instances of unusual word-usage also create the impression of man's being a part of a machine, as Hildegard Aust points out in her analysis of a short passage from Kleiner Mann:

> "Pinneberg setzt sich langsam in Bewegung." Von einer Maschine sagt man, daß sie in Bewegung gesetzt wird. Das Mechanische des Gehens wird damit gekennzeichnet. Der Mensch denkt nicht daran, daß er geht. Die Beine laufen alleine, er "tüffelt" nach Hause.[9]

Aust incorrectly asserts that this passage occurs after Pinneberg's frustrating and unsuccessful attempts to find work. He has in fact just been offered a post by Lehmann, the personnel officer for Mandel. It is then false to attribute Pinneberg's automatic gait to disillusionment in this case, but it is an indication that he is seen to be part of the machinery of society.

Kufalt too, in a scene that otherwise smacks of sensationalism, encounters the rigidness of the authorities, when he tries to have his friend Beerboom interned in a hospital. Although they meet a sympathetic janitor, who as an individual obviously wants to help them, they have no success with their pleas. According to rules and regulations the doorkeeper is not allowed to help them, he is rendered

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[9]"Sprache und künstlerische Wirkung," Neue deutsche Literatur, V (1957), 133.

powerless. It is not only to Kufalt that the janitor as a representative of the ordered hospital system must refuse help, but to other unfortunates too: "'Lieber Herr', sagt er zu Kufalt, 'ich glaub' ja, Sie meinen's gut mit dem Herrn, aber wenn Sie wüßten, wieviel Arbeitslose zu uns kommen und denken, sie kriegen Essen und ein gutes Bett, wenn sie den wilden Mann spielen...'"[10] In view of the janitor's understanding attitude, it becomes clear that it is some social order that decrees the need for harsh measures.

Kalübbe provides a parallel example in Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben. Not unsympathetic towards the farmers' plight, he is fully conscious of the harm his actions cause: "...und wenn es gut geht, nehme ich ihnen eine Ecke von ihrem Stolz und die Kuh aus dem Stall, und geht es schlimm an, dann mache ich sie heimatlos, wo sie seit tausend Jahren saßen."[11] Kalübbe even expresses great distaste for his role: "Aber was mich angeht, das ist, daß ich zwischen ihnen umhergehe wie ein Scharfrichter aus dem Mittelalter, der geächtet war...,"[12] but even so as a representative of the state ("ich bin der Staat"[13]) he cannot allow these feelings to interfere with his duty and he must confiscate the cattle

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[10]Hans Fallada, Wer einmal aus dem Blechnapf frißt (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1964), p. 188.

[11]Hans Fallada, Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, in Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben, ed. Günter Caspar (Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1971), p. 31.

[12]Fallada, Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, p. 32.

[13]Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, p. 31.

in the full knowledge that this can bring about the ruin of the farmer in question.

Society is not only depicted as an unfeeling system which is indifferent to the needs of the individual, but there are also certain cases when the petit-bourgeois are positively exploited by those who have power over them. On one level this is indicated by vague general statements such as that of von Prackwitz blaming the Inflation on the Government: "Diese Entwertung ist der infamste Betrug am Volke."[14] This statement echoes the citizen quoted by Siegfried Kracauer in his sociological study of die Angestellten: "Meine ganzen Ersparnisse sind mir durch den großen Volksbetrug (Inflation) geraubt."[15] On another level Fallada gives a more detailed picture of the effects of exploitation of a more specific nature, as we see when the quota system is introduced into Mandel's shop.

Systems such as that described in Kleiner Mann were in fact devised and put into operation by employers in the twenties and thirties to extract the fullest possible measure of return from their employees. The unemployment situation in Germany made the lower middle class easy prey for their employers, whose demands they could not refuse. Siegfried Kracauer frequently indicates the extent of their

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[14]Fallada, Wolf unter Wölfen, p. 222.

[15]Die Angestellten aus dem neuesten Deutschland (Frankfurt am Main: Societäts-Verlag, 1930), p. 66.

power. The system described by Fallada can be taken as typical of those actually in existence at that time:

> Im Dezember hatte Herr Spannfuß, der neue Organisator der Firma Mandel, erst einmal in den Betrieb hineingerochen, im Januar nahm er seine TÄtigkeit richtig auf. Die Verkaufsquote für den einzelnen VerkÄufer, seine Losung, wurde in der Herrenkonfektion auf das zwanzigfache seines Monatsgehalts festgesetzt.[16]

Such pressure, enforced at a time when the fear of unemployment lurked constantly in the mind of every petit-bourgeois, was indeed a sign of insensibility on the part of the employer. The "small man", in his helplessness, was open to exploitation of this kind.

A further example of people being "used" by their employers is to be found in Blechnapf. Double blame is attached to the guilty parties, Seidenzopf and Marcetus, in this case, as they work under the auspices of a religious, charitable organization. The typing pool sponsored by this organization and run by Seidenzopf is supposedly a means of rehabilitating ex-prisoners, so that they can subsequently take up jobs in their own right. The organizers, however, take the opportunity to exploit their protégés by offering them long working hours and poor remuneration, thereby making a considerable profit. Once again the petit-bourgeois is fully exploited while not in a position to defend himself.

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[16]Fallada, Kleiner Mann, p. 137.

Only in Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben is a successful attempt made to counteract such exploitation, but this was only possible, because the farmers acted as a group in boycotting the town of Altholm. The farmers were amongst the first to suffer from the inland policy of the Weimar Republic. Unable to pay the exorbitant taxes demanded by the Government, they were obliged to witness the ruination of their farms and their livelihood as their stock was confiscated and auctioned. Naturally this led to counter-action, which was, however, only successful because the farmers had a certain solidarity that was missing in the case of townspeople.

Although Fallada makes no mention in Wolf unter Wölfen of those industrial magnates who, to the detriment of others, used their position and power to extract benefit from the inflationary situation,[17] he does give us an example of the possibilities of such speculative enterprise in the machinations of Quarkus, who invested all of his available capital in farms:

> Er war sicher, kam er mit einer Handtasche, besser noch mit einem Koffer voll Geld auf einen Hof, verlangte eine Kuh zu kaufen, kaufte er zehn, warf mit dem Gelde, prahlte mit dem Gelde, lockte mit dem Gelde -- kein Besitzer würde widerstehen können! Zu den zehn Kühen kaufte er den Kuhstall, das Stroh,

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[17] See Helmut Heiber, Die Republik von Weimar (München: DTV, 1966), p. 100. Heiber names Hugo Stinnes as one such industrial magnate.

> das Land, auf dem das Stroh wuchs, den ganzen Hof schließlich. Und wenn er dem Besitzer dann noch sagte, er könne wohnen bleiben, weiter wirtschaften, mit den Erträgen anfangen, was er wollte -- der würde ihn für übergeschnappt halten, ihm andere Verkäufer zuführen, mehr als gewünscht. Bis freilich dann eines Tages der Tag kommen würde, an dem die Mark -- ja, wie es mit der Mark an dem Tag sein würde, das konnte sich keiner auch nur ausdenken. Aber jedenfalls war dann der Hof da. Nein, die Höfe.[18]

Quarkus is a very minor and by no means unpleasant person, but nevertheless his way of thinking typifies those who were willing to gain by the misfortune and loss of others.

These instances of exploitation can of course also be counted as being among the corrupt elements of society. Certainly the charitable organization described by Fallada is corrupt, since it professes altruistic aims for which it is supported by donators' funds, whilst it also schemes to profit from the very people it claims to help.

In Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, however, Fallada portrayed corruption on a grander scale, not just in its effects on one person, but as an insidious cancer permeating the life of a small town, affecting everyone who wields power from a Government minister and the mayor to the staff of the local newspaper and the middle class officials of the town. All are tainted by their indulgence in intrigues.

The very first chapters in this novel, presented as a prelude with the title "Ein kleiner Zirkus namens Monte",

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[18]Fallada, Wolf unter Wölfen, p. 125.

introduce us to the atmosphere prevalent in the small town, in the form of the ambience in the local newspaper offices. The intrigues and devious schemes carried out there serve as a parallel case -- or indeed as a prelude -- for those which are unfolded on the other levels mentioned above.

The elements of corruption depicted with reference to the Chronik involve several aspects of the running of the newspaper: the administration, the content of the articles printed and the attitude of the journalists.

The first thing we learn about the Chronik is that the campaign for sales promotion is carried out with the aid of an out-dated statement of circulation numbers, which no longer reflects the true state of affairs:

> "Bitte, wir haben eine notarielle Bescheinigung über siebentausend."
> "Du mußt die Stelle mal radieren, wo das Datum steht. Die ist schon ganz schwarz vom Zuhalten mit deinem Daumen, all die drei Jahre, seit die Zahl mal richtig war."[19]

That this dishonesty is matched by the mode of presentation of news and by the attitude of the reporters becomes evident in the following conversation between Stuff and Schabbelt. Stuff opens:

> "Sie kennen Kallene, den Polizeimeister? Natürlich. Nach der Revolution war er rot. SPD oder USPD, jedenfalls wurde er belohnt. Der dümmste aller Polizeidiener wurde Polizeimeister."

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[19]Fallada, Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, p. 17.

"Weiß ich."

"Und als er's war, trat er aus der Partei aus, gab das Parteibuch zurück, wurde streng deutschnational, wie er vorher gewesen."

"Und..,?"

"Na, der macht abends auf dem Rathaus Aufsicht über die Reinemachefrauen. Wenn die Büros leer sind, Herr Schabbelt!"

"Und...?"

"Da sind so ein paar junge Weiber dabei, einfach Klasse. Man kann es sich ja denken, wenn sie so rutschen über den Boden, man bekommt da Einblicke..."

"Du kannst es dir jedenfalls denken, Stuff."

"Na, natürlich, nicht nur der Kallene kommt bei so was auf andere Ideen."

"Mach's kurz Stuff. Wer hat ihn erwischt?"

"Der rote Bürgermeister!" schreit Stuff. "Der dicke Gareis. Auf seinem Schreibtisch haben sie's gemacht."

"Und...?"

"Na, Herr Schabbelt! So eine Frage! Jetzt hat der Kallene wieder das Parteibuch."

"Es ließe sich etwas daraus machen," meint Schabbelt. "Aber nicht für uns. Etwa für die KPD. Tredup kann es weiterquatschen."

"Herr Schabbelt!"

"Ich kann Ihnen nicht helfen, Stuff. Sehen Sie, wie Sie sonst Ihre Spalten vollkriegen mit Lokalem."[20]

This dialogue, itself a stratagem on the part of Stuff to obtain permission to publish a diatribe against the Monte circus, reveals much about the moral standards of this circle of people. The level of reporting is obviously that of scandal-mongering sensationalism, a level which is of course characteristic of many newspapers that make no literary or intellectual pretensions.

However, in the story of scandal that Stuff recounts here there are details that reveal political corruption of

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[20] Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, pp. 22-23.

a serious nature. This information too is suppressed by the owner of the Chronik, who does not wish to offend the local authorities by publishing news of this kind, news that would compromise them. Obviously, reporting the truth to the general public seems to be a matter of secondary importance, other considerations taking precedence. No one on the newspaper staff is quite free to expose the truth as he sees fit. Stuff must make concessions to Schabbelt and Schabbelt in his turn to his creditors.

The Monte story itself, a pure fabrication concocted by Stuff, is further proof of the corruption permeating this newspaper office. One may be tempted to regard the whole episode purely as a production of Fallada's imagination, but indeed like the account of the farmers' revolt, it is based on Fallada's own experiences in Neumünster.[21]

The sort of corruption illustrated here is not the kind which affects the small man directly to his detriment, but it bears the typical traits of Fallada's conception of social forces in that it consists of dishonesty and lack of altruism.

Finally, society is regarded as a hostile force which impinges on the private life of the individual. Again this is well-illustrated by an episode in Kleiner Mann, echoing findings made by Kracauer.

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[21] See Günter Caspar, "Nachwort" to Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, pp. 651-653.

Employers in the twenties had a very paternalistic and condescendingly moralistic attitude towards their employees, feeling that they could dictate to them not only how they should dress and behave at work, but how they should conduct themselves in their private life too. The physical quality they sought in prospective employees was, according to Kracauer, "die moralisch-rosa Hautfarbe".[22] "Moralisch" is however an ethical, not a physical quality, which for Kracauer was indicative of the attitude prevalent amongst employers:

> Ich weiß. Eine moralisch-rosa Hautfarbe -- diese Begriffskombination macht mit einem Schlag den Alltag transparent, der von Schaufensterdekorationen, Angestellten und illustrierten Zeitungen ausgefüllt ist. Seine Moral soll rosa gefärbt sein, sein Rosa moralisch untermalt. So wünschen es die, denen die Auslese obliegt.[23]

The intricacies of this attitude are illustrated in Kleiner Mann, when Fräulein Fischer, a young girl who is having an affair with a fellow employee, is subjected to questioning by the personnel officials at Mandel's. On her outburst, "Was ich außer dem Haus tue, das ist doch meine Sache!"[24] she is enlightened about the firm's policy in these matters:

> "Da irren Sie sich," sagt ernst Herr Spannfuß. "Das ist ein Irrtum von Ihnen, Fräulein.

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[22]Kracauer, Die Angestellten, p. 32.

[23]Die Angestellten, p. 32.

[24]Fallada, Kleiner Mann, p. 209.

> Das Warenhaus Mandel ernährt und kleidet Sie, das Warenhaus Mandel ermöglicht die Basis Ihrer Existenz. Es muß erwartet werden, daß Sie bei all Ihrem Tun und Lassen zuerst an das Warenhaus Mandel denken."[25]

This episode, demonstrating the employer's assumption that he has the right to interfere in and to expect certain standards in the private life of his employees, is followed by an interlude which, especially in its stark contrast to the sentiments expressed above, reveals fully the fickleness of the employers and the ruthlessness with which they wield the power they hold:

> Sie überschätzen das Interesse, das die Firma an Ihrem Privatleben nimmt. Ihr Privatleben ist für das Haus Mandel ohne Interesse. Legen Sie Ihre Geschichten gefälligst so, daß sie außerhalb der Geschäftsstunden erledigt werden können.[26]

The interest of the Mandel business in its employees is not to be confused with pastoral care, with the concerned and well-meaning support of a benevolent patron. It is a self-centred interest, directed only at protecting the firm, as the real reason for the young girl's dismissal reveals:

> Sie treffen sich in einem Hotel. Sie können dort gesehen werden, von irgendwelchem Kunden. Für den Kunden ist es peinlich, für Sie ist es peinlich, für die Firma ist es ein Schaden. Sie

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[25] Kleiner Mann, p. 209.

[26] Kleiner Mann, p. 210.

> können -- man darf ja ganz offen mit Ihnen reden -- in andere Umstände kommen, nach den jetzigen Gesetzen haben wir Sie dann weiter zu beschäftigen, wieder ein Schaden.[27]

Other instances of the authorities' encroaching upon the individual's right to privacy occur in Blechnapf. The most crass example is the official's visit to Kufalt's lodgings, thus revealing his past to relative strangers, as Liese tells him:

> Ja, was ich noch sagen wollte, Herr Kufalt...Mutter erzählt, neulich war einer da, einer in Zivil mit der Marke, verstehen Sie, und hat sich nach Ihnen erkundigt. Ob Sie abends lange ausgehen, ob Sie viel Geld haben, mit wem Sie verkehren und all so was...Nur, daß Sie Bescheid wissen...Mutter und mich stört's nicht.[28]

The aforementioned confiscation of livestock from farmers could also be regarded as direct interference on the part of the authorities.

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[27] Kleiner Mann, p. 209. The reader of today may be prompted to ask how it is possible for the firm to dismiss the girl in her present circumstances, when they could not do so if she were pregnant. Whereas employers in the twenties and thirties had extensive power over their employees and could dismiss them for apparently arbitrary reasons, it seems that the law did protect the employees in some cases, one of these obviously being the instance of pregnancy. In the situation described here Fräulein Fischer would have no proof that she was dismissed unfairly. Had she been pregnant, however, she could have taken issue with her employers. The Mandel firm was obviously taking precautions against that eventuality.

[28] Fallada, Blechnapf, p. 135.

On the whole then, Fallada regards society as a harsh, impersonal force which exploits the individual whilst ignoring his needs. In view of the fact that elements of society could impinge so directly on the individual's private life, it remains a striking trait of the petit-bourgeois that he is unaware of the importance of main political events. Ruth Römer describes the attitude of Fallada's characters as follows:

> Falladas kleine Leute sind Angestellte, Verkäufer, Händler, Zwergunternehmer. Sämtlich unpolitisch, fühlen sie sich gesellschaftlichen Kräften ausgeliefert, die sie nicht durchschauen können noch wollen. Sie versuchen sich zwischen den politischen Gegensätzen im Geschiebe der Klassen durchzuwinden und ihr Schiffchen voranzubringen unter dem Wind, den andere machen.[29]

This unawareness is matched by Fallada's own political vagueness both in the narrative parts of the novels and in his own life. References to the general political scene, providing the background to the specific crisis he is describing, are rare in his works and usually of a cursory nature. (Jeder stirbt für sich allein, written, as Fallada himself tells us in his report "Wie ich Schriftsteller wurde", on the suggestion of a friend in the Soviet zone and with the aid of Gestapo documents, is an exception to this.[30]) In one short passage from Wolf unter Wölfen, for

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[29]"Dichter des kleinbürgerlichen Verfalls," Neue deutsche Literatur, V (1957), 122.

[30]Fallada first wrote a factual report based on the documents he found: "Über den doch vorhandenen Widerstand der Deutschen gegen den Hitlerterror," Aufbau, I (1945), 211-218.

instance, he mentions members of the Government by name and the French Occupation of the Ruhr district.[31] In Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben and Kleiner Mann he mentions the existence of the Nazi party:

> Wie das Land über uns lachen wird! Das hätte die Polizei der Roten Front, Hitlerleuten, selbst dem Reichsbanner bieten sollen: weggefegt wäre sie![32]

> Die Nazis waren nicht langweilig. Er kam rasch in den Sturm, er erwies sich bei Zusammenstößen als ein außerordentlich besonnener junger Mann, der seine Pranken (und was gerade in ihnen war) mit einem fast künstlerischen Gefühl für Wirkung benutzte. Lauterbachs Lebenssehnsucht war gestillt: er konnte sich fast jeden Sonntag -- und manchmal auch wochentags am Abend -- prügeln.[33]

> Die Zurückgebliebenen aber, die Ärmsten, die Härtesten und die Mutigsten, fühlten sich irgendwie zusammengehörig, und das Schlimme war, daß sie eben doch nicht zusammengehörten: sie waren entweder Kommunisten oder Nazis, und so gab es ewig Krach und Schlägerei.[34]

Although the reader gleans some idea of the wider political scene in Germany from passages such as these, this is but a cursory glimpse. In his description of the National Socialist movement Fallada is either non-committal, just mentioning the fact that there were many clashes between them and the Communists, or else he writes in a

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[31] Fallada, Wolf unter Wölfen, p. 471.

[32] Fallada, Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, p. 192.

[33] Fallada, Kleiner Mann, p. 44.

[34] Kleiner Mann, p. 226.

derogatory tone, as is illustrated by his characterization of the Nazi Lauterbach as a particularly unintelligent person, whose only reason for joining the Party was to enjoy the fighting that this entailed. The fact that this was written in 1932 shows that Fallada had no inkling of the potential of the Nazi Party.

Fallada's political indecisivness is reflected also in his ambivalent actions whilst dealing with the Nazi authorities, as Paul Mayer recounts in his monograph on Ernst Rowohlt. Just before Blechnapf was to be published Fallada had fallen into disfavour with the local Nazi officials because of a conversation he had had with Ernst von Salomon and which had been reported to the authorities. (Fallada recounts these events in a series of newspaper articles published in 1945.) Mayer describes Fallada's subsequent fears and doubts:

> Die Hauptfigur dieses Romans war ein Rückfall-verbrecher, dem das Gefängnis zur eigentlichen Heimat geworden war. Ob die Nazis, die sich moralisch gebärdeten, so etwas schlucken würden, konnte allerdings fraglich sein. Um sie zu besänftigen und ein Verbot des Buches zu verhindern, schrieb Hans Fallada ein Vorwort zu seinem Roman, das man als eine Anpassung an die Ideologie des neuen Regimes auffassen mußte. Dieses Vorwort wurde zum Gegenstand einer langen Diskussion zwischen Fallada, Rowohlt und mir. Fallada glaubte, auf diese totale Kapitulation, über deren Unwahrhaftigkeit er sich im klaren war, nicht verzichten zu können. Er meinte: "Ich kann nicht anders. Auswandern kann ich nicht, all mein Geld habe ich in das Haus in Fürstenberg gesteckt, das ich doch nicht von heute auf morgen verkaufen kann....Ich muß in den bitteren Apfel beißen." Ich wandte ein: "Wenn das neue System vielleicht

> nicht tausend Jahre bestehen wird, sondern nur zehn oder fünfzehn Jahre, dann wird man unserem Freund das Vorwort als unzweideutiges Bekenntnis zu den Nazis vor die Nase halten. Alle Zeugenaussagen, er habe das Vorwort nur zur Tarnung geschrieben und die Nazis in Wirklichkeit gehaßt, haben dann keinerlei Beweiskraft. Seine Stellungnahme zu den Nazis hat er ja hier schwarz auf weiß fixiert." Hans Fallada blieb beharrlich: "Ich kann nicht anders."[35]

That Fallada made concessions to the Nazis does not necessarily mean that he shared their way of thinking, but it does strengthen the impression that he was politically unsure of himself and certainly that he did not have the courage of any convictions he might have had.

This general appraisal of Fallada's political standpoint leads us into a discussion of the confrontation between the individual and society, as he portrayed it in his novels.

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[35] Ernst Rowohlt in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1968), pp. 122-123.

CHAPTER III

CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

It is in Fallada's description of the individual's struggle against social forces that many autobiographical details, traits of Fallada's own character become evident. This being the case, it would be profitable at this point to outline those aspects of Fallada's life that are relevant to the discussion of his concept of the confrontation between the individual and society.

One can gain a general picture of Hans Fallada's life and temperament from various sources. When extracting autobiographical detail from such works as Damals bei uns daheim and Heute bei uns zu Haus, the two books of reminiscences that Fallada wrote during Hitler's time, we should remember that the author sometimes saw fit to change or add certain particulars, with the result that we cannot accept these works wholely and unquestioningly as a true representation of what happened in his life. This is even indicated in the sub-titles of these two works, which are respectively: "Erlebtes, Erfahrenes und Erfundenes" and "Ein anderes Buch Erfahrenes und Erfundenes". So whilst a great number of the events in these novels were actually experienced by the author, the reader cannot overlook the fact that parts of the narrative are fiction too. We must also remain fully aware of Fallada's conscious use of poetic licence

whilst incorporating autobiographical events into such works as Der Trinker and the article "Der tödliche Rausch", published posthumously in the magazine Neue Illustrierte. With these reservations in mind we can nevertheless extract some basic facts about Fallada's life and particularly about his way of thinking from his own works. To counter-balance the necessarily subjective accounts that we have from Fallada, we may turn among others to Jürgen Manthey, who in his monograph on Fallada also provides us with factual details from a more detached and objective point of view.[1]

Even in his childhood Fallada suffered frequently from mishap and illness. In Damals bei uns daheim he significantly devotes a whole chapter entitled "Pechvogel" to this aspect of his life. He describes how, surveying his childhood days in retrospect, he felt that good luck had always evaded him, and that no matter how hard he used to try to rectify matters, he always remained unsuccessful. To his mind his reminiscences proved, "wie das Unheil...auch redliche Anstrengungen von mir boshaft vereitelte."[2] He was in other words convinced that he was "ein geborener Pechvogel".[3] Even though he goes on to say that this misfortune ceased after a while, we still see the effects

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[1]Hans Fallada in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1963).

[2]Hans Fallada, Damals bei uns daheim (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowholt, 1965), p. 207.

[3]Fallada, Damals bei uns daheim, p. 207.

of his earlier attitude reflected in the bearing of his characters. The following statement is typical of an attitude which is often found in Fallada's novels:

> Das Unglück hatte alles getan, mich trübe und mißvergnügt zu machen, meinen Anstrengungen den Mut zu nehmen und in mir einen gewissen Fatalismus zu erzeugen, der auch das Widrigste mit der Apathie eines abgetriebenen Packesels hinnahm.[4]

Although the adult Fallada could look back on his earlier ill luck with a certain wry humour, -- "Hat man denn je schon davon gehört, daß eine auf ein Pflaster springende Glaskugel wie ein reißendes Tier auf den Werfer zurückfährt?! Ich nicht, von andern nämlich, bei mir halte ich freilich alles für möglich."[5] -- it is the sentiment of "mir geht doch alles schief, ich habe nie Glück"[6] that is echoed in his works.

"Mir geht eben alles schief"[7] thinks Kufalt, but even Pinneberg's Lämmchen, an otherwise strong-willed and optimistic person, gives utterance to the existential "Angst" that plagues the petit-bourgeois:

> Wenn das auch alles nicht stimmt und nur Kientopp ist, das ist richtig, daß unsereiner immer Angst haben muß, und daß es eigentlich ein Wunder ist, wenn es eine Weile gut geht. Und daß immerzu

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[4] Damals bei uns daheim, p. 207.

[5] Damals bei uns daheim, p. 214.

[6] Damals bei uns daheim, p. 207.

[7] Hans Fallada, Wer einmal aus dem Blechnapf frißt (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1964), p. 18.

> etwas passieren kann, gegen das man ganz wehrlos ist, und daß man immerzu staunen muß, daß es nicht jeden Tag passiert.[8]

Fallada's childhood, marred by sickness and many a misadventure was succeeded by an equally turbulent adolescence and adulthood.[9] At the age of eighteen he and a young friend engaged in a duel as a part of a suicide pact. Having killed his friend von Necker, Fallada then shot himself, endangering his own life with two wounds in the chest and adding physical sickness to the psychological disturbances which obviously plagued him. Acquitted of a murder charge on the grounds of diminished responsibility, Fallada spent two years in an asylum in Tannenfeld. He was subsequently employed as an agricultural trainee on various country estates and then in Berlin as the head of a department in a firm that distributed seed potatoes. Having steady employment did not, however, have a steadying influence on the erratic young Fallada. He came into contact with the Seyerlins, who introduced him to the drug morphine. Already in 1917 Fallada had to take treatment for drug-addiction and alcoholism, the latter being his self prescribed cure for the former! Through the Seyerlins Fallada also met Ernst Rowohlt, which was his

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[8]Hans Fallada, Kleiner Mann, was nun? (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1965), p. 199.

[9]The following biographical details, unless otherwise stated, are taken from Jürgen Manthey's monograph, Hans Fallada in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten.

first contact with literary circles and the beginning of a serious interest in pursuing a career as a writer.

The first attempt to cure himself of drug and alcohol addiction was only a prelude to many more that followed in the next few years. In fact, Fallada intermittently relapsed throughout his lifetime. In 1923 he was found guilty of embezzlement and sentenced to a term of three months' imprisonment, a sentence which was deferred until 1924. Manthey describes Fallada's degree of dependence at this time:

> Fallada pflegte damals schon auf nüchternen Magen vier große Kognak zu trinken, und ohne eine starke Morphium- oder Kokain-Injektion begab er sich nie an die Arbeit.[10]

Further instances of embezzlement led to a second term of imprisonment in 1925. To avoid being interned for the rest of his life in an asylum, Fallada had fabricated some cases of embezzlement which he claimed to have committed before he was a morphine addict. The two and a half years he spent in prison brought him a certain measure of rest and respite from the disorderly life he led outside.

After his release he met Anne Issel, known to all as Suse, whom he married in 1929. He had many jobs in Hamburg and he subsequently worked for the General-Anzeiger in Neumünster. Concurrently he started work on a novel which

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[10]Manthey, Hans Fallada, p. 59.

he at that time called Ein kleiner Zirkus namens Monte and which was later to be known as Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben. Manthey sees in this activity an attempt on Fallada's part to turn his self-destructive urges, as expressed in his alcoholism, into a more positive and creative force. Fallada himself writes of the intoxicating effect that writing had on him:

> Es war wie ein Rausch oft gewesen, aber ein Rausch über alle Räusche, die irdische Mittel spenden können. Noch die schlimmsten Stunden, die ich ganz und gar daran verzweifelt war, wie es weitergehen sollte, schienen mir besser als jetzt meine schönsten Freistunden. Nein es war schon so, ich hatte von einem Gift getrunken, das ich nicht mehr loswerden konnte aus meinem Körper und Geist, und nun dürstete es mich danach, mehr von diesem Gift zu trinken, es immer zu trinken, jeden Tag, den Rest meines Lebens hindurch.[11]

Fallada met Rowohlt again and moved to Berlin in 1930 to take up a position as a publisher's reader. Rowohlt arranged Fallada's workday so that it ended at two o'clock in the afternoon, with the result that the latter had ample time to apply himself to his writing. It soon became apparent, however, that Fallada had not completely overcome his predilection for alcohol. A period of hospitalization for Suse together with an abundance of funds from the success of Kleiner Mann was enough to make him surrender to temptation again in 1933. In fact Fallada reverted to

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[11]Hans Fallada, "Wie ich Schriftsteller wurde," in Gesammelte Erzählungen (Rowohlt: Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1967), p. 299.

alcoholism many times in his life and finally to drug addiction. Although he was admittedly excitable and highly irritable when he was writing, the completion of a book was always a danger signal for his wife, as he invariably fell into a state of aimless depression at these times.

Fallada was on the whole prone to depression and feelings of inadequacy. His uneasy relationship with the Nazis constantly troubled him, with results of the kind that have already been mentioned with reference to the foreword of Blechnapf. The partially unfavourable reception of this novel and the later rejection of Wir hatten mal ein Kind (1934) caused Fallada to avoid topics of social import and to turn to more inconsequential themes. At this time he wrote many children's stories and novels of a fairy-tale quality.

Fallada's intemperance gradually led to the disintegration of his marriage. He was separated from his wife in 1944, at which time he had already met a fellow alcoholic and drug addict Ursula Losch, who was to become his second wife. In the meantime, however, Fallada was once more to be incarcerated in an asylum, this time in Altstrelitz, where he produced the manuscript of Der Trinker.

On February 1st, 1945 Fallada married Uschi Losch. In the last two years of his life both he and his wife were to pay recurrent visits to asylums in and around Berlin. Fallada died on February 5th, 1947.

That events of Fallada's life have been incorporated into his works is quite obvious: crime and imprisonment in Blechnapf, alcoholism and hospitalization in Der Trinker, his experience as a clerk and a salesman in Kleiner Mann and as an agricultural trainee in Wolf unter Wölfen. However, elements of his own character and temperament are also evident in the novels. The matter of his irritability has already been mentioned. An episode related cursorily by Manthey and in more detail by Paul Mayer serves to illustrate this and other aspects of his temperament vividly. Mayer's version reads thus:

> Der Autor des Buches Kleiner Mann -- was nun?, vom Schicksal dazu verdammt, zwischen Morphium und Alkohol zu wählen, hatte "Lämmchen", seine erste Frau und Gefährtin in der Notzeit, verlassen. Zur Hochzeitsfeier mit der zweiten Frau lud er Rowohlt ein. "Väterchen" folgte der Einladung nur ungern, weil er mit "Lämmchen" sympathisierte; während des Hochzeitsmahls, bei dem es trotz des Krieges hoch her ging, ertönten Sirenen, die einen Fliegerangriff ankündigten. Rowohlt mußte Schutz in einem Bunker suchen. Nach der Entwarnung aber kehrte er nicht mehr zur Hochzeitsgesellschaft zurück, sondern begab sich zu seinem Freund Paul Wegener, wo er die Nacht verbrachte. Als dem gastfreien Hochzeiter bewußt wurde, daß Rowohlt nicht wiederkommen würde, bekam er einen Wutanfall. Mit dem Ausruf: "Das ist eine richtige Fallada-Hochzeit!" zertrümmerte er das Mobiliar und vertrieb die übrigen Gäste.[12]

This violent reaction reveals not only Fallada's extreme excitability and quick temper, but his dependence on the approval of those around him too, and a further weakness

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[12]Ernst Rowohlt in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1968), p. 142.

of his -- namely the tendency to feel ill-used if things did not go strictly according to his plans. These weaknesses become to a certain extent the failings of the characters in his novels too. Although his main personages are on the whole likeable people who win the sympathy of the reader, they are nevertheless extremely touchy persons also, who tend to over-react to various situations.

One sometimes feels that this impression, far from illustrating Fallada's actual intention of presenting his characters in this way, is rather a result of Fallada's style, in that his vocabulary tends to be restricted and repetitive. This limitation results in less differentiation of emotional responses than might have been expected. Fallada's depiction of people's reactions to various stimuli is always black and white -- it never shows shades of grey. The word "wütend" for instance frequently occurs where a normal reaction to the given situation would better be imparted by less extreme words such as "mißvergnügt" or "unzufrieden". Or perhaps the use of such seemingly inappropriate expressions is an unconscious reflection of Fallada himself, notoriously unstable and quickly angered. Those critics who wish to detract from the validity of the social criticism in the novels are quick to seize on this point to demonstrate that the characters fail in life not because of social ills but because of their own innate weaknesses. One argument against this contention is the previously stated fact that as Fallada himself was a product and a part of the society he portrayed

in his works, it does not matter how much of his own personality he poured into his fictional characters. In all their seemingly irrational behaviour they are not just pen and ink replicas of Fallada, they truly represent the mentality and the psychological state of the ordinary man of the times.

An argument presented by Wolfgang Joho in his interesting contribution to the discussion that ensued after the re-issue of Der Trinker in the DDR[13] lends support to this thesis:

> Die Opfer eines Systems erregen in dem, der von ihnen liest, auch dann Sympathie und Mitleid, wenn sie selbst keineswegs von individueller Schuld freizusprechen sind, vorausgesetzt, daß aus der Schilderung ihres Schicksals die größere, prinzipielle Schuld dieses hassenswerten Systems hervorgeht.[14]

We can argue then that this irritability, seemingly a facet of the characters' tendency to over-react, is itself caused

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[13]The re-issue of Der Trinker by the Aufbau Verlag in 1953 caused a great deal of controversy in literary circles in the DDR. The discussion of the novel was recorded in a number of articles, especially in the weekly newspaper Sonntag. Of great interest was the central issue about whether or not Der Trinker should be made available to the general public. See amongst others:

i) Sabine Brandt, "Der Trinker -- ein Protest gegen die Unmenschlichkeit," Sonntag, Nr. 18, 1954, p. 6.

ii) Wolfgang Joho, "Falladas Trinker und die Humanität," Sonntag, Nr. 18, 1954, p. 6.

iii) Heinrich Ruhl, "Zur Problematik des Trinkers," Der Bibliothekar, VIII (1954), 79-80.

iv) Waltraut Schiller, "Hans Fallada," Der Bibliothekar, VII (1953), 890-891.

v) Max Schroeder, "Hans Fallada. Zum Erscheinen seines nachgelassenen Romans Der Trinker," Neue deutsche Literatur, I (1953), 126-130.

[14]"Falladas Trinker und die Humanität," Sonntag, Nr. 18, 1954, p. 6.

by the psychological strain brought about by social pressures, and so in a way it is hardly to be regarded as a personal weakness but rather as a social evil.

Because he treats a "fellow" shop assistant in an unpleasant manner, Pinneberg becomes guilty of an act of baseness. Instead of being inspired by collegial sentiments, he treats the cowed old man in a haughty and offensive way, feeling at the same time that he is wrong in doing so. This desire to exert pressure on someone else is, however, an expression of the frustration that Pinneberg feels, because he is being treated in the same way:

> Und während Pinneberg all dies sagt und immer aufgeregter wird, fühlt er innen, daß er ein Schwein ist, daß er sich genau so mies benimmt wie seine miesesten Kunden. Daß er den älteren, verdatterten, sorgenvollen Herrn schweinemäßig behandelt. Und er kann doch nicht anders, er hat eine Wut auf die Welt, alle, alle sollen sie hin werden. Aber leider ist nur der ältliche Verkäufer da.[15]

In this instance he has just received a salary amounting to far less than he had expected, and so he is subjected to more financial strain. He feels resentment, because he must struggle to obtain even the most basic necessities, and hence it is with a feeling of defiance that he decides to buy a dressing table, which under the circumstances is a luxury. As he is in this mood, he vents his rage on the first person with whom he comes into contact. Although Pinneberg is not

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[15]Fallada, Kleiner Mann, p. 104.

free of the individual guilt that Joho mentions, he still retains the sympathy of the reader, especially since this interlude can be seen to be a result of social pressures and not of some innate nastiness in Pinneberg's personality.

The pressures to which Pinneberg is further subjected would be sufficient to justify a high degree of testiness on the part of anyone involved in a similar situation. The quota system, his struggles with bureaucracy, and further humiliation at the close of the novel bring him almost to his breaking-point. Social difficulties can cause psychological strain and mental distress. The seemingly exaggerated reaction of Fallada's characters to a given situation is only extreme, because the existing social system is extreme.

Max Tredup is in a situation similar to that of Pinneberg. He behaves badly towards his wife, concealing money from her in times of financial need, and striking her in an argument that arises because of his secrecy. It is, however, a basic feeling of insecurity, a fear of future poverty that cause Tredup anxiety and nervous tension, as he later explains to Elise:

> ...ich wollte ja nicht schlecht sein. Es war nur, daß ich solche Angst hatte vor der Zukunft. Ich dachte immer, wir verbrauchen die tausend Mark so mit, und wenn es mal schlecht geht, haben wir nichts.[16]

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[16]Hans Fallada, Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, in Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben, ed. Günter Caspar (Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1971), p. 500.

Tredup does not have a secure job and is in constant fear of losing it. His fears for the future are then prompted by social insecurity, and consequently we can say that his frame of mind is also determined by his social position to a certain extent.

Willi Kufalt, to take another example, is not basically mean but rather a somewhat weak person. However, his constant disappointments with society make him fatalistic and suspicious of every new venture. Like Fallada, he too regards himself as a "Pechvogel", and is convinced that none of his plans will ever be fulfilled:

> Da kannst du dabeistehen. Du hast es nicht gewollt, und daß du einmal verheiratet sein wirst mit ihr, du glaubst es noch jetzt nicht. Nein, an dir soll es nicht liegen, wer so fassungslos weint vor Erlösung, den kann man nicht willentlich kränken. Aber es wird doch nichts, immer wird alles anders.[17]

Kufalt's attitude towards Hilde Harder is altogether ambivalent, again a result of his meeting only with hostility in society. He often reacts negatively, seeking selfish, hidden motives behind her words and actions: "sie hat mich reinlegen wollen," and yet basically he knows that she has been honest with him since the beginning of their relationship: "Sie hat es doch nicht schlimm gemeint. Sie hat recht, Kinder müssen einen Vater haben,...und sie hat grade recht, wenn sie versucht, einen Vater zu kriegen."[18] It

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[17] Fallada, Blechnapf, p. 263.

[18] Blechnapf, p. 245.

is as though his being at odds with society has so much destroyed his confidence in himself that he is incapable of accepting love.

Biographical elements do colour Hans Fallada's depiction of the individual, particularly in determining the psychological state of mind of his characters. The preceding discussion has shown, however, that this does not necessarily detract from the realism of Fallada's presentation; a weak man can still be regarded as a victim of society, if it is social injustice that induced and fostered his weaknesses. This is not to say that society must bear the entire blame for the ills suffered by the individual. The extent to which the members of the lower middle class, and the Angestellten as a group in particular, are responsible for the social set-up and the propagation of social injustices will be discussed more fully in Chapter IV.

Continuing with the analysis of the confrontation between the individual and society, as it is presented by Fallada, one question that naturally springs to mind is: why should we use the word "confrontation" when talking about the attitude or relationship of the lower middle class person to society at large? "Confrontation" has connotations of antagonism and inimicality. That society is in fact regarded as a hostile force has already been discussed. The friction between man and society arises from a genuine desire on the part of the ordinary man to maintain some standard of decency and respectability in

his personal life, no matter what society may inflict on him. This desire, usually equated with having material possessions or even with being able to dress well, is echoed throughout Fallada's works in the petit-bourgeois dream of buying a small business and being able to start a new life with a fresh promise of success. We find the words first in the mouth of Elise Tredup: "Wir geben es auf die Sparkasse. Und dann sehen wir, daß wir ein nettes Geschäft kriegen, am besten nicht hier in Altholm."[19] These ideas are then, with little change, reiterated by Kufalt[20] and Wolfgang Pagel.[21] The Pinnebergs, with their more moderate desires, simply wish that life were not quite as difficult as it is: "'Ein klein bißchen gerechter könnte es gerne zugehen,' denkt Lämmchen."[22] Man's struggle to cope with society is equivalent to his struggle to maintain respectability.

In contrast with those engaged in this struggle we see many minor characters who have already lost the fight. Impecuniosity and extended periods of crisis lead to decadence. The lowering of moral standards and the decadence that proliferates especially in large cities in times of general crisis are a facet of life that has been recorded

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[19]Fallada, Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben, p. 500.

[20]See: Blechnapf, p. 59.

[21]See: Hans Fallada, Wolf unter Wölfen (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1952), p. 32.

[22]Kleiner Mann, p. 211.

by historians and belletrists alike, as far as the Berlin and the Germany of the twenties and thirties are concerned. Erich Kästner's Fabian is but one such novel, portraying a young man who cannot come to terms with the chaos he sees around him.

Fallada too confronts us with the degradation forced on many. Poverty and disillusionment often lead his characters into what society considers to be immoral behaviour: prostitution and petty theft for instance. It is noteable that Fallada does not morally condemn the perpetrators of these transgressions, if they were necessary for survival. He either objectively relates the episode, as when Krymna goes wood-stealing in Kleiner Mann, or sometimes he even justifies the need for such behaviour.

Petra Ledig, for instance, who had turned to prostitution, was fortunate in being able to attach herself to Wolfgang Pagel, who undertook -- albeit unsuccessfully -- to support her. Less fortunate are women such as Frau Siemsen, who in hard times also turns to prostitution. Kufalt, who presumably also speaks for the author, finds this acceptable, because the woman needs money to feed her children. Therefore, he defends her against the prison pastor:

> "Hören Sie mal," ruft der Pastor wütend, "das ist alles nicht wahr, Entstellungen sind das, Verleumdungen. Wissen Sie, daß ich Sie wegen Beamtenbeleidigung anzeigen kann? Die Siemsen ist eine zweifelhafte Person, sie läßt sich mit anderen Männern ein, einer Unterstützung ist sie gar nicht würdig!"

"Wahrscheinlich soll sie ihre Gören verhungern lassen, statt auf den Strich zu gehen! --"[23]

Fallada does not criticize the "culprit" on moral grounds, but rather he implicitly blames society for putting people into a position where anti-social behaviour is necessary for survival. The moral laxity he portrays is yet another evil caused by social deprivation. Petra Ledig, and presumably Frau Siemsen too, do not enjoy their enforced "profession". Petra demonstrates this by giving up prostitution as soon as she can, by staying with Pagel. This indicates that she does not do it by choice but as an unavoidable evil in order to survive in times of financial hardship.

We have then these two poles in Fallada's works: the desire to remain respectable and the failure to do so. But there is also a whole panorama of phases in between, ranging from unspecified feelings of insecurity to alienation and isolation. The stages in this development and the conclusion of it represent the decay and decline of humanistic ideals amongst the petit-bourgeois and in society as a whole, for altruistic attitudes would not allow the isolation of individuals. Humanism assumes man to be the centre of the universe and demands that all efforts be directed towards the general good of mankind. Georg Piltz points out the fact that Fallada's characters are not concerned with

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[23] Blechnapf, p. 52.

humanistic ideals: "Den Raabeschen Gestalten geht es noch um die Humanität, den Falladaschen nur noch um die nackte Existenz."[24]

This point is illustrated in the following excerpt from Kleiner Mann:

> ..."Es ist schwer. Ich laufe den ganzen Tag treppauf, treppab, und manchmal verkaufe ich den ganzen Tag nicht für fünf Mark Ware. Nun," sagt sie und versucht zu lächeln, "das ist nicht so schlimm, die Leute haben eben wirklich kein Geld. Aber wenn manche nur nicht so häßlich wären! Wissen Sie," sagt sie behutsam, "ich bin nämlich jüdisch, haben Sie es gemerkt?"
>
> "Nein...nicht sehr," sagt Pinneberg verlegen.
>
> "Sehen Sie," sagt sie, "man merkt es doch. Ich sage immer zu Max, man merkt es. Und da finde ich doch, die Leute, die Antisemiten sind, sollten so ein Schild an ihre Tür machen, daß man sie gar nicht erst belästigt. So kommt es immer wie aus heiterem Himmel. 'Hauen Sie ab mit Ihrem unsittlichen Zeug, Sie olle Judensau,' hat gestern einer zu mir gesagt."
>
> "So ein Schwein," sagt Pinneberg wütend.
>
> ...
>
> Aber Pinneberg hat plötzlich Angst, daß ihm auch noch dies Kapitel ihres Lebens versetzt wird. Sie ist ein armes, kleines, graues Wesen, sicher, und seltsamerweise hat er bei ihrer Erzählung gedacht: 'Wenn ich nur nicht bald sterbe, daß Lämmchen sich so quälen muß,' und er kann sich gar nicht denken, wie Frau Nothnagels Leben eigentlich weiterlaufen soll. Aber er ist schon so traurig genug heute nacht, er sagt ganz plötzlich, ganz unhöflich in ihre Worte hinein: "Ich muß mal telephonieren. Entschuldigen Sie!"
>
> Und sie sagt sehr höflich: "Bitte sehr, ich möchte Sie nicht abhalten."
>
> Und Pinneberg geht.[25]

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[24]"Epiker der kleinen Leute," Berliner Zeitung, 5. 5. 1952.

[25]Kleiner Mann, pp. 158-159.

The widespread discrimination against an ethnic group, as referred to here, is an obvious example of the anti-humanitarian behaviour that was soon to bear the seal of approval of the State and to be regarded almost as a duty on the part of the German citizen. As far as Pinneberg is concerned, however, his transgression against humanistic ideals is of a less serious and cruel nature. Initially he listens to Frau Nothnagel not unsympathetically and not without interest, even tentatively offering her advice. He is obviously shocked by her plight as a Jewess in the Germany of the early thirties, and disgusted by the way anti-Semites treat her, but his participation in her trials does not go beyond this expression of sympathy. Even whilst listening to and sympathizing with her in her adverse circumstances, pessimistic thoughts about his own future enter Pinneberg's mind, and immediately his attention is distracted from the misfortune of others. The petit-bourgeois Pinneberg has no time for altruistic thoughts and actions, for he is too preoccupied with his own troubles.

It was stated above that the conflict between the individual and society springs from the desire of the individual to retain his self-esteem and respectability. To do this he must be part of... one is tempted to say "society", but as we are using this term to mean the hostile authorities that the petit-bourgeois encounters, we must use different terminology. The "little man" must

strive to remain within the "system", to be part of what is regarded by society as being the "respectable community". In Fallada's novels we see the ordinary man at different levels of integration into this system or respectable community.

The various stages that we see are:
(a) some initial degree of integration,
(b) the threat of losing one's position in the community,
(c) exclusion from this community, resulting in the isolation of the individual.

It does not hold true for all of the five novels here under discussion that we see each of the three stages. They also do not always appear in this order. For instance, Wolf unter Wölfen tends to reverse the order as far as the main character is concerned. This novel will be dealt with first, as it does not fit into the scheme of the other novels for reasons which will be expounded later. The other novels will be discussed chronologically, according to the time treated in them, which also happens to be the order in which they were written.

From the very beginning of Wolf unter Wölfen we encounter characters divorced from the community. Wolfgang Pagel feels that there is no place for him in the existing system, and so he aimlessly wastes his time gambling. Through his experiences working in the country, he gradually develops some sense of responsibility towards himself and

others, and finally evinces the desire to settle down and become integrated into the new community that was formed after the chaotic days of the Inflation and the Weimar Republic. Douglas Wiley Crow sees in this "a crucial turning point in the author's evaluation of the role of the individual in society."[26] He also concludes that:

> A possible cause of this alteration of viewpoint is the accession of Hitler to power since the publication of his previous novel. If Fallada had earlier viewed the Weimar Republic as an oppressive state, he now recognized the true face of oppression in Adolf Hitler's regime. The result was a reevaluation of his previously held opinions.[27]

This interpretation of Fallada's attitude is hardly viable. The novel Wolf unter Wölfen was not meant to be and certainly is not a positive appraisal of life in the Weimar Republic. Even if Fallada had reevalued his earlier opinions, he was not likely, conscious as he was of the importance of gaining the approval of the official Nazi critics, to extol the benefits of a government that had been ousted and defamed by Adolf Hitler.

The only positive element of the plot is the development of Wolfgang Pagel, and one is inclined to believe that the creation of this positive figure was a concession to the Nazi requirements of literary works. This supposition is

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[26]"Fallada: The Individual vs. Authority" (Diss., Louisiana State University, 1971), p. 52.

[27]Crow, "Fallada: The Individual vs. Authority," pp. 52-53.

supported by the obvious peace-offering that Fallada made to the Nazis in the foreword:

> Unter Verzicht auf alle äußere Ähnlichkeit wollte der Autor ein Bild jener Zeit malen, die so nahe und doch so völlig überwunden ist. Aber vielleicht geziemt es dem Geretteten, überstandene Gefahr nicht ganz zu vergessen, sondern ihrer gedenkend sich doppelt der glückhaften Rettung zu freuen.[28]

Knowing of the conflicts and difficulties Fallada had with the Nazi authorities, one can full well appreciate the irony of the thought that one should be pleased because of the "glückhaften Rettung" that the Nazis brought to Germany! A glance at the official Nazi reception of Fallada's works will give us some more concrete examples of the situation he faced.

Helmuth Langenbucher had written a devastating rejection of Fallada's Blechnapf:

> Falladas Kufalt-Roman war...natürlich nicht gegen, sondern für etwas geschrieben, für eine Menschensorte nämlich, die nicht lebt, sondern immerzu gelebt wird und verlebt und verbraucht, und die zurückbleibende Asche kommt in die Retorte Falladascher Schreibtechnik, wird hier mit viel Sentimentalität und nicht weniger Schweinerei angerührt und heraus kommt der Fallada-Homonkulus, Marke Kufalt, Batzke usw. (Man halte es mir zugute: für solches Zeug ist im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland kein Wort der Ablehnung scharf genug!)[29]

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[28]Fallada, Wolf unter Wölfen, from the foreword.

[29]"Falladas Blechnapf und die deutsche Literaturkritik," Berliner Börsen-Zeitung, 10. 6. 1934.

His subsequent criticism of Wir hatten mal ein Kind was equally as harsh, even suggesting that as far as the Nazis were concerned Fallada was to be rejected altogether:

> Die Geister scheiden sich allmählich auch auf kulturellem Gebiet, und das ist gut so, die Masken fallen, die wirklichen Haltungen werden erkennbar, wir sehen klarer. Eines der Scheidewasser auf dem Gebiet der literarischen Urteilsbildung ist Hans Fallada, darin sehen wir seine Bedeutung für uns.
> ...
> ...Falladas neues Buch Wir hatten mal ein Kind ist ebensowenig wie sein Roman Wer einmal aus dem Blechnapf frißt ein Buch, wie wir es heute brauchen, das erfüllt sein müßte mit dem Glauben an unsere Kraft, das ein Bekenntnis sein müßte zu unserer Art...[30]

In another article in Deutsches Volkstum Langenbucher repeats much of what he had said in his first two polemical commentaries, and typically for him he closes with a threat to all who might defend Fallada or write favourable criticism of his works:

> ...es geht um den Neubau der deutschen Kultur. Die Träger des öffentlichen Amtes der gestrigen Kritik müssen wissen, was diesem Neubau förderlich sei und geeignet, ihn zu festigen: sie müssen wissen, was ihm schädlich sei und geeignet, seine Grundlagen auszuhöhlen. Immer wieder werden Bücher kommen wie die, die ein Fallada schreibt, aber das Bedeutsame daran ist, daß sich an ihnen die Geister scheiden. Wir wollen uns, zu jeglichem Dienst bereit, zu denen scharen, die das ewige Deutschland wollen, dessen Führer heute Adolf Hitler ist; und wir wollen ein waches Auge haben auf alle die

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[30] "Wir hatten mal... Grundsätzliche Betrachtungen zu einem neuen Buch von Fallada," Berliner Börsen-Zeitung, 11. 11. 1934.

> andern, die nicht willens sind, mit ihrer Arbeit "den betonten Forderungen unserer Tage" Rechnung zu tragen.[31]

We know that Fallada was much concerned that the Nazis should allow him to continue to write and publish, so Hellmuth Langenbucher's "waches Auge" cannot have done anything to bolster Fallada's confidence in his own future. Rowohlt too, according to Günter Caspar, expressed trepidation as far as Langenbucher was concerned: "Das ist ein übler Mann."[32]

In view of the uneasy feelings engendered in both author and publisher by Langenbucher's criticism, it is not surprising that Fallada made concessions to the Nazi authorities this critic represented. Future critics were not entirely cowed by Langenbucher's threats. Harald Eschenburg for example, significantly seeks out the positive aspects of Wolf unter Wölfen: "Das Buch hat weit mehr 'positive' Figuren, als es die vielen Entlarvten und Gescheiterten zunächst durchblicken lassen,"[33] but the voice of a National Socialist critic -- and of course it is

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[31]"Hans Fallada," Deutsches Volkstum, XVI (1934), 993. With the words "betonten Forderungen unserer Tage" Langenbucher is making a reference to an article by Karl Rauch, whose views he severely criticized both in this article and in the commentary on Wir hatten mal ein Kind. See: Karl Rauch, "Die Tragödie des einsamen Mannes," Das deutsche Wort, X, Nr. 45 (1934), 1-2.

[32]"Nachwort" in Hans Fallada, Wer einmal aus dem Blechnapf frißt, in Ausgewählte Werke in Einzelausgaben, ed. Günter Caspar (Berlin und Weimar: Aufbau, 1971), p. 645.

[33]Review of Hans Fallada's Wolf unter Wölfen, Das deutsche Wort, XIII (1937), 354.

this voice that threatened Fallada's livelihood -- is raised in a polemic against Fallada again:

> Die wirren Stoffanhäufungen seiner Werke befriedigen den Unterhaltungstrieb einer unkritischen Menge. Dennoch bleibt es immer unsere Aufgabe, gegen literarische Werke wie die Falladas, auf das schärfste die Stimme zu erheben.[34]

We can see then in the creation of the positive figure Wolfgang Pagel an attempt to pacify the National Socialist authorities. Contrary to what Eschenburg says, however, the optimism about Pagel's future is a somewhat forcibly construed "happy end", and it is not enough to disguise the basic pessimism of the novel. For the one promise of success we have many instances of lives that have foundered on the rocks of the Inflation.

In as far as we can speak of any social order at all during the Inflation, we see many characters of Wolf unter Wölfen integrated in the respectable community, in that they are employed and receive enough remuneration -- even if it is only barely enough -- to survive without resorting to crime. Their existence, however, is fragile, and their hopes for the future are bound to remain unfulfilled. Apart from the many whose savings have become worthless (Elias and Kniebusch for example), there are those like Otti Kujahn,

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[34] [Hellmuth Langenbucher], "Wirrwarr einer zügellosen Phantasie," Bücherkunde, V (1938), 49. This article was in fact published anonymously, but the content, style, and vocabulary are so reminiscent of Langenbucher that the assumption that he is the author would seem to be justified.

whose future also looks dismal:

> Der Preis, den Otti Kujahn für diese beiden Dinge fordert, nach langem Zögern fordert (Ja, was soll ich nun für die Sachen nehmen? Mich haben sie noch nicht drei Mark gekostet), entspricht etwa dem Porto für einen Stadtbrief. Sophie ist nun doch der Ansicht, daß das Handarbeitsgeschäft Kujahn nicht ewig bestehen wird. Bei diesen Preisen wird Fräulein Kujahn die Inflation nicht aushalten, sondern bald ausverkauft und verhungert sein.[35]

Fallada might not describe the stage of isolation in the case of people like Otti Kujahn, but its imminence is implied. So many people faced disastrous poverty during the years of the Inflation that the whole social structure threatened to dissolve into chaos.

Von Studmann recognizes this. Described as a "Kindermädchen", he survives mentally only if he can turn his energy to helping others. He is, however, constantly thwarted in his desire to do this, and concludes that there is no place for humanistic idealism in a world where every individual must fend for himself. Realizing that he cannot survive in this inhumane world -- "Er war nicht geneigt, die Tollheiten dieser tollen Zeit mitzumachen, selber toll zu werden"[36] -- he decides to go where he can apply his ideals. All this he confides to Pagel:

> Ich bin wieder einmal die Treppe hinunter gefallen, mein lieber Pagel, nur etwas schmerzhafter als

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[35] Wolf unter Wölfen, p. 359.

[36] Wolf unter Wölfen, p. 671.

> damals im Hotel. -- Trotzdem bin ich der festen Überzeugung, daß es irgendwo auf der Welt einen Fleck gibt, wo man unbedingte Zuverlässigkeit schätzt. Ich habe mich entschlossen, eine mir seit langem angebotene Stellung anzunehmen. Ich werde in dem Sanatorium des Geheimrats Schröck arbeiten. Ich bin sicher, daß die dort befindlichen Kranken vollkommene Zuverlässigkeit, Gleichmäßigkeit des Temperaments, eine nicht zu erschöpfende Geduld zu schätzen wissen.[37]

This represents von Studmann's final disillusionment with mankind. It is ironic that he has to go and work in a mental home in order to escape from what he regards as the madness of the world. Von Studmann could have given the kind of humane assistance that many of the characters in Wolf unter Wölfen needed. The fact that he was frustrated in his attempts to do so also signifies the waning of humanistic idealism, in that it is not allowed to flourish.

Tredup in Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben already bears the traits of the "little man" whom Fallada was to portray more fully in his next novel. Again we do not see every stage in the dissolution of social security in this work. Tredup is in an insecure position from the very beginning, expending all of his energy by working day and night to earn a meagre income, which barely supports himself and his family. His untimely death eliminates the almost inevitable stage of isolation for him, and Fallada provides a protector for his family in the person of Stuff. In Tredup's story the

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[37] Wolf unter Wölfen, p. 671.

novel does contain some indications of Fallada's conception of the "little man", but this work is primarily based on actual happenings.

There are those with broken careers in this novel -- Stuff, Frerksen, Gareis -- but these were based on actual, living people, and were in that sense not creations of Fallada's imagination. They were, with the exception of Frerksen, dynamic people who had the will-power and energy to form their own destiny. They are not representative of Fallada's concept of the lower middle-class individual in the way that Tredup is.

Only in Kleiner Mann do we see the full development from relative security to complete desolation. We see Pinneberg in two jobs, but in each of these his security is threatened by his employers. In the first instance Kleinholz is trying to find a husband for his unattractive daughter. Pinneberg could not marry this girl, as he is already married himself, a fact which Kleinholz does not know. However, on the pretext that his business does not merit the expense of three assistants, he dismisses Pinneberg anyway, when the latter makes no sign of responding to Kleinholz's thinly veiled hints. This tale seems somewhat unlikely and rather bizarre. One element of truth in the episode is, however, the fact that employers wielded a great deal of power over their employees, who were in a weak position because of the threat of unemployment if they were to leave their present jobs. Kleinholz uses this to

manipulate his assistants: "Kucken Sie nicht so dämlich! Wenn Ihnen hier was nicht paßt, bitte, Sie können gehen.--"[38] The petit-bourgeois are at a further disadvantage, because unlike the working class they have a weak union:

> "Das ha'ck nich nödig, Herre," sagt Kube, "daß Sie mir hier was von Klauen sagen. Ick meld das dem Verband. Das ha'ck nich nödig, das wollen wir mal sehen."
>
> Er kiekt über seinen grauweißen Schnauzbart dem Chef grell in die Visage.
>
> "O Gott, das ist schön," jubiliert Pinneberg innerlich. "Verband! Wenn man das auch so könnte! Aber bei uns? Neese!"[39]

When Pinneberg is dismissed, he is powerless to take action against his employer.

Because of Jachmann's connections, Pinneberg obtains another position, this time at Mandel's in Berlin. Here he is subjected to extreme mental stress by the quota system, which has already been described. In spite of this tension the employers demanded that their assistants should look relaxed, attractive and pleasing to the customer's eye. Kracauer expands on this in his study of these circumstances: "Die Ausdrücke nett und freundlich wiederholen sich wie Repertoirestücke...Vor allem wollen die Arbeitgeber einen netten Eindruck haben. Leute, die nett wirken -- zu einer solchen Wirkung gehören natürlich die netten Manieren, -- werden auch dann genommen, wenn ihre Zeugnisse schlecht sind."[40]

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[38] Kleiner Mann, p. 52.

[39] Kleiner Mann, p. 53.

[40] Die Angestellten aus dem neuesten Deutschland (Frankfurt am Main: Societäts-Verlag, 1930), p. 31.

Speaking further of the reaction of the Angestellten to this "Druck der sozialen Verhältnisse", Kracauer says, "Die Angestellten müssen mittun, ob sie wollen oder nicht. Der Andrang zu den vielen Schönheitssalons entspringt auch Existenzsorgen, der Gebrauch kosmetischer Erzeugnisse ist nicht immer ein Luxus."[41] The full implication of this panic-stricken drive to maintain appearances will be seen later.

One of Kracauer's interviewees intimates that employers in Germany held the picture they had of employees in the United States of America as a model of perfection. This idea is echoed in Kleiner Mann:

> ...da kommt dieser Herr Organisator und sagt: "Sie sehen so abgespannt aus, Herr. Ich empfehle Ihnen Ihre Kollegen drüben in den States als Vorbild, die sehen abends genau so munter aus wie am Morgen. Keep smiling! Wissen Sie, was das heißt? Immer lächeln! Abgespanntheit gibt es nicht, ein abgespannt aussehender Verkäufer ist keine Empfehlung für ein Geschäft..."[42]

In this way Pinneberg and his colleagues were subjected to manifold stresses by their employers, with no promise of any benefits in return. They suffered from the pressures of the quota system, the stress of keeping up appearances and hiding the tension they felt, and finally the difficulties

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[41] Kracauer, Die Angestellten, p. 33.

[42] Kleiner Mann, pp. 181-182.

of living on a meagre salary. With this in mind, we can see that even in the stage of relative security life was by no means easy.

Pinneberg finally succumbs to these pressures. He reaches his breaking-point and is dismissed from Mandel's, this time without the prospect of finding new employment. Willing to work and having committed no crime against society, he is rejected by his employers, representatives of society. Pinneberg has failed to live up to the expectations of society because of the harshness of the system imposed on him.

He suffers further frustration and humiliation at the hands of the authorities who deal with him as an unemployed person, just as he had done when trying to claim the nursing mother's bonus that was due to him and his wife after the birth of their son. Even when society professes to be benevolent, the individual finds he has to battle constantly with red tape, much to his frustration and degradation. Fallada describes with irony, and not without a touch of bitterness, the way in which a bureaucratic system can harass the individual:

> Also es ist ein Brief, und es sind zwei schöne Fragebogen, nein, kein Geld, das Geld hat Zeit.
>
> Papier. Ein Brief. Zwei Fragebogen. Aber sich einfach hinsetzen und die ausfüllen? O nein, mein Lieber, so einfach machen wir es dir nicht. Zuerst besorge dir einmal eine standesamtliche Geburtsurkunde für "Kassenzwecke", denn die Krankenhausbescheinigung über die Geburt genügt

> uns natürlich nicht. Dann unterschreibe die Fragebogen und fülle sie hübsch aus, es werden da zwar lauter Sachen gefragt, die wir alle schon in unserer Kartothek haben, wieviel du verdienst, wann du geboren bist und wo du wohnst, aber ein Fragebogen ist immer hübsch.[43]

The authorities are not interested in the person Pinneberg but only in the rules. Here too he receives no humane assistance from society.

Pinneberg's final humiliation occurs when he is pushed off the pavement by a policeman. It is of great significance that he is jostled off the Bürgersteig. This indicates that he does not belong to the accepted community any more, and it is the final proof that he is no longer considered fit to walk amongst the Bürger. It is significant too, and it confirms Kracauer's comments on the petit-bourgeois mentality regarding this point, that the decline of Pinneberg's social status is accompanied by a deterioration in his physical appearance, in his dress. Pinneberg's final social demise is a direct result of his wearing shabby and threadbare clothing.

As for Büchner's Woyzeck, so for the petit-bourgeois of the twenties and thirties respectability was inextricably bound up with appearances. Equating virtue with possessions and appearance, Woyzeck says:

> Ja, Herr Hauptmann, die Tugend -- ich hab's noch nit so aus. Sehn Sie: wir gemeine Leut, das hat keine Tugend, es kommt einem nur so die Natur; aber wenn

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[43] Kleiner Mann, pp. 176-177.

> ich ein Herr wär und hätt ein' Hut und eine Uhr und eine schöne Anglaise und könnt vornehm reden, ich wollt schon tugendhaft sein. Es muß was Schönes sein um die Tugend, Herr Hauptmann. Aber ich bin ein armer Kerl![44]

Not only the policeman equates dress with respectability, for Puttbreese had also made a derogatory remark about Pinneberg's clothing saying, "Machen Sie sich doch den Kragen ab...Das Ding ist ja ganz dreckig. Über'n Jahr arbeitslos und läuft noch mit 'nem Gipsverband. Solchen ist wirklich nicht zu helfen."[45] It is, however, in the incident with the policeman, representative of law and order in the community, a representative of the authorities; that Pinneberg comes to a full realization of his exclusion from that respectable community:

> ...Pinneberg sieht die Leute an. Bis an das Schaufenster stehen die Leute, gutgekleidete Leute, ordentliche Leute, verdienende Leute.
>
> Aber in der spiegelnden Scheibe des Fensters steht noch einer, ein blasser Schemen, ohne Kragen, mit schäbigem Ulster, mit teerbeschmierter Hose.
>
> Und plötzlich begreift Pinneberg alles, angesichts dieses Schupo, dieser ordentlichen Leute, dieser blanken Scheibe begreift er, daß er draußen ist, daß er hier nicht mehr hergehört, daß man ihn zu Recht wegjagt: ausgerutscht, versunken, erledigt. Ordnung und Sauberkeit: es war einmal. Arbeit und sicheres Brot: es war einmal. Vorwärtskommen und Hoffen: es war einmal. Armut ist nicht nur Elend, Armut ist auch strafwürdig, Armut ist Makel, Armut heißt Verdacht.[46]

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[44] Woyzeck, in Werke und Briefe (München: DTV, 1973), p. 114.

[45] Kleiner Mann, p. 233.

[46] Kleiner Mann, p. 239.

Willi Kufalt of Blechnapf is already excluded from the accepted community at the commencement of the novel; he is already at odds with society. Although Kufalt must accept the blame for losing his position in this social set-up, his story is still a logical sequel to Pinneberg's in that Fallada now shows the impossibility of regaining one's former status in the eyes of society, once it has been lost. In this case prison-life, life in an institution of society, has made Kufalt unfit for life in the normal community; it has made his rehabilitation a near impossibility.

As an ex-prisoner, Kufalt is disadvantaged in multifarious ways in the struggle to regain his social status. Overshadowing all such attempts is his lack of confidence in himself, his inability to make decisions, which is a direct result of the ordered existence he led in prison -- an existence that was ordered for him and a life in which he had no decisions to make. Kufalt is conscious of the effect that this has had on him:

> Er ist ratlos. Es ist genau, wie wenn er rauskommen wird. Da sind auch so viele Möglichkeiten, und bei allen ist ein "Aber" dabei. Man muß sich entscheiden können, aber das eben kann er nicht. Wie soll er auch? Die haben ihm doch hier fünf Jahre lang jede Entscheidung abgenommen. Die haben gesagt: "Friß!" und da hat er gefressen. Die haben gesagt: "Geh durch die Tür!" und da ist er durchgegangen, und "Schreib heute!" und da hat er heute seinen Brief geschrieben.[47]

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[47] Blechnapf, p. 15.

The security of prison-life is no preparation for the hardships of life outside, especially in times when a crisis is testing the viability of the inhabitants of a country in general. Even the prison director realizes that Kufalt is being sent out into the world burdened with this disadvantage:

> Sie denken, Sie sind gesund. Sie denken, Sie haben Ihre zwei Pensum gestrickt, das geht auch draußen. Aber hier hat Sie nichts abgelenkt, Kufalt, draußen kommen all die Sorgen und die Versuchungen. Sie sind doch den Umgang mit Menschen nicht mehr gewohnt. Und dann die Kinos, in die Sie nicht dürfen, und die Cafés, für die Sie kein Geld haben. Das wird alles schwer für Sie sein, Kufalt. Das Schwere fängt erst an.[48]

Even if later Kufalt makes errors in judgement which mean that a fair amount of the blame for his returning to crime attaches itself to him, Fallada here criticizes a society which gives birth to institutions that make men incapable of leading normal lives. This is not a humane society, educating men towards good; rather it excludes some of its members and destroys them.

The prejudice of the ordinary citizen he meets is another burden that Kufalt has to cope with. In his association with Hilde Harder, for instance, he conceals the fact that he is an ex-prisoner, knowing full well that her father would forbid their relationship, if this knowledge reached his ears. No amount of good-will on the part of Kufalt would be sufficient to break down this barrier of prejudice.

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[48] Fallada, Blechnapf, pp. 47-48.

The secrecy and furtiveness to which Kufalt has to resort to try and progress in spite of such hindrances only jeopardize his security and further debilitate his will to do well. A minor incident can disrupt his plans entirely. This happens when he is falsely accused of stealing money from a client. As an ex-prisoner he is a natural suspect, but even though he is innocent of this crime he is punished indirectly, as the officer in charge of the case pays a visit to the Harders, thereby bringing Kufalt's past record to light and destroying his new-found relationship with Hilde.

In spite of the fact that he had already paid for his initial crime with a term of imprisonment, Kufalt is still suspect to the authorities and his fellow citizens alike. This suspicion, as intimated above, tends to protract the ex-prisoner's exclusion from the respectable community.

Realizing his inability to cope with life, Kufalt reverts to crime and finally returns to prison. His exclusion from the community takes place not just on a psychological level as with Pinneberg, but his isolation is physical too. Pinneberg was horrified when he realized his position, but Kufalt on the other hand is content: "Hier hat man ganz seine Ruhe. Hier quatscht keiner auf einen los. Hier braucht man nichts zu beschließen, hier hat man sich nicht so zusammenzunehmen."[49] He no longer

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[49] Blechnapf, p. 387.

wishes to battle with society, but is happy to admit defeat and live in exclusion from the respectable community. Imprisonment is regarded as a refuge from the harshness of the reality outside. As far as the prison system as an institution of society is concerned, one certainly cannot maintain that it propagates humanitarian ideals.

Der Trinker is probably the most personal document that Fallada ever wrote, and it is therefore not as orientated towards social criticism as the other novels discussed here. Sommer's estrangement from his wife, his alcoholism and his state of mental health all reflect Fallada's situation at that time. However the complete lack of humanity reflects the times in which it was written, that is in the 1940's towards the end of the Hitler regime.

Erwin Sommer, in his feelings of insecurity, bears traits of the "little man", although he is the owner of a small business. He is in danger of losing the favour of society and the accepted community, because his business is failing. There is here implicit criticism of the harshness of a society which sets demands upon the individual and which rejects that individual when he fails to live up to its expectations.

Initially then there is a social reason for Sommer's distress, but his extreme reactions and illogical thinking, excesses promoted by his alcoholism, cannot be attributed to social ills.

However, we do still see Sommer as an individual at odds with society. There is now no desire in the individual to comply with society's demands. Sommer's final isolation entails, like Kufalt's, internment in an institution, but Sommer goes one step further in his longing for death as a total release. This is the most radical rejection of a life subjected to social dictates to be found in Fallada's works.

Abrams' definition of humanism reads that it "insisted on the primacy of reason (considered the distinctively human faculty), as opposed to the instinctual appetites and the 'animal' passions in ordering human life."[50] The view presented by Fallada is that society has forced the "little man" to revert to "animal" passions or instinctual behaviour in the final instance; he reacts with passion rather than reason.

In the last three novels discussed here the main characters all react to their final defeat by taking recourse to some sort of animal or instinctual behaviour. For Pinneberg there is no hope left but the animal warmth he shares with Lämmchen and the comfort he receives from her. Kufalt too returns with relief to the comfort of the cell, as a wounded animal returns to its lair, but not without first hurting others in an animalistic fury, to alleviate the hurt which society had inflicted on him. And finally

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[50] A Glossary of Literary Terms (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), pp. 73-74.

Sommer, interned in a mental asylum, has a blind longing for death, a desire fired by passion and not reason.

Society, therefore, in leading individuals inevitably to this "animal" despair, does not propagate humanistic ideals, but helps destroy them, by destroying man's will or ability to exist according to the prevalent social mores. The struggle to exist precludes all striving after higher goals. From the tendency towards increased pessimism in these works it becomes clear that Fallada is describing the decline of humanistic idealism in the relationship between the individual and society.

Even though society may not pursue such altruistic aims, however, we must still ask ourselves why the small man so easily fell prey to the harshness of society. This brings us to a discussion of the relationship between individual and individual.

CHAPTER IV

THE RELATIONSHIP AND ATTITUDES BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS

The preceding chapter discussed the "little man" in his dealings with those in authority over him. This we could call his "public" life. But what of his home life and his relationship with his peers? In an examination of these we naturally see the effects that his confrontations with society have on his private life, but we also become aware of elements in the small man's way of thinking that make him easy prey for an exploitative system.

The main reason why the petit-bourgeois are so helpless in their dealings with society is because they have no solidarity as a class. They cannot organize themselves to work as a group, so they do not have the strength of numbers in any confrontation with those in authority over them. This situation dates back to post World War I Germany, as shown in Wolf unter Wölfen. In a passage to which Tinsley also draws attention[1], Wolfgang Pagel rejects von Studmann's offer to help, giving the reason that once they had fought for a common cause and could expect help and cooperation, but now every individual must fend for himself:

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[1]"Hans Fallada's Concept of the Nature of the 'Little Man'" (Diss., Tulane University, 1965), p. 62.

> Warum wollen Sie sich nicht von uns helfen lassen, Pagel? fragte der Oberleutnant wieder.
> ...
> Vielleicht können wir Ihnen raten, fuhr er mit sanfter, aber eindringlicher Überredung fort. Besser wäre noch, wenn wir Ihnen irgendwie tatkräftig helfen könnten, Pagel, sagte er sehr eindringlich. Als wir damals auf Tetelmünde vorgingen, fielen Sie mit dem Maschinengewehr hin. Sie haben sich nicht einen Augenblick besonnen, meine Hilfe anzunehmen. Warum soll in Berlin nicht gelten, was in Kurland galt --?
> Weil, sagte Pagel finster, wir damals für eine Sache kämpften. Heute kämpft jeder für sich allein -- und gegen alle.[2]

With these few words uttered by the young Pagel Fallada characterizes the prevalent attitude of the times. The objective observer would perhaps rejoin that the lower classes did in fact have a common cause, i.e. to fight against systems that oppressed them, but these people were simply not well enough organized to function as a class. The members of the petit-bourgeoisie felt no affinity to any specific organization, they were not committed to any ideology. In their struggle to maintain a respectable existence they felt that there was no one to whom they could turn for support, that each individual had to battle through life "für sich allein". That this ultimately meant he would also have to fight "gegen alle" is a natural consequence which will be discussed later.

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[2]Hans Fallada, Wolf unter Wölfen (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1952), p. 229.

Kracauer emphasizes the unstable position of the Angestellten, typical of the lower middle class, by drawing attention to the contrast between them and the working class. Members of the working class had a widespread belief in a certain ideology to unite them. Referring to this, Kracauer summarizes the dominant psychological climate of the Angestellten as follows:

> Die Masse der Angestellten unterscheidet sich vom Arbeiter-Proletariat darin, daß sie geistig obdachlos ist. Zu den Genossen kann sie vorläufig nicht hinfinden, und das Haus der bürgerlichen Begriffe und Gefühle, das sie bewohnt hat, ist eingestürzt, weil ihm durch die wirtschaftliche Entwicklung die Fundamente entzogen worden sind. Sie lebt gegenwärtig ohne eine Lehre, zu der sie aufblicken, ohne ein Ziel, das sie erfragen könnte.[3]

Not only political uncertainty is responsible for the lack of organization of the petit-bourgeoisie as a class, however, and Kracauer pinpoints other elements of the psychological make-up of the Angestellten that serve only to diminish any feelings of solidarity:

> Die im bürgerlichen Deutschland ausgeprägte Sucht, sich durch irgendeinen Rang von der Menge abzuheben, auch wenn er nur eingebildet ist, erschwert den Zusammenhalt unter den Angestellten selber. Sie sind aufeinander angewiesen und möchten sich voneinander sondern... Schon die untersten Angestelltengruppen behandeln sich so, als seien sie durch Welten geschieden.[4]

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[3] Die Angestellten aus dem neuesten Deutschland (Frankfurt am Main: Societäts-Verlag, 1930), p. 117.

[4] Kracauer, Die Angestellten, p. 108.

Kracauer continues to give an example of such vanity, saying, "daß sich die Expedientin eines Warenhauses himmelhoch ihrer Kollegin überlegen dünkt, die nur die Verbindung zwischen Lager und Warenausgabe herzustellen hat."[5]

Several facets of the lower middle class situation and of the contrast between them and the working class are revealed in the interview that Pinneberg has with his future father-in-law Herr Mörschel. The episode contrasts the political decisiveness of the Arbeiter, and the feeling of solidarity this affords him, with the insecurity of the Angestellten, the white collar workers. Emma Mörschel's father outlines and scathingly criticizes the disunity of the petit-bourgeois:

> "Überstunden," sagt Herr Mörschel lakonisch. Und zu Pinneberg zwinkernd: "Sie machen doch auch manchmal Überstunden, nicht wahr?
> "Ja," sagt Pinneberg. "Ziemlich oft."
> "Aber ohne Bezahlung --?"
> "Leider. Der Chef sagt..."
> Herrn Mörschel interessiert nicht, was der Chef sagt. "Sehen Sie, darum wäre mir ein Arbeiter für meine Tochter lieber: wenn mein Karl Überstunden macht, kriegt er sie bezahlt."
> "Herr Kleinholz sagt...," beginnt Pinneberg von neuem.
> "Was die Arbeitgeber sagen, junger Mann," erklärt Herr Mörschel, "das wissen wir lange. Das interessiert uns nicht. Was sie tun, das interessiert uns. Es gibt doch 'nen Tarifvertrag bei euch, was?"
> "Ich glaube," sagt Pinneberg.
> "Glaube ist Religionssache, damit hat 'en Arbeiter nischt zu tun. Bestimmt gibt es ihn.

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[5] Die Angestellten, p. 108.

> Und da steht drin, daß Überstunden bezahlt werden müssen. Warum krieg ich 'nen Schwiegersohn, dem sie nicht bezahlt werden?"
>
> Pinneberg zuckt die Achseln.
>
> "Weil ihr nicht organisiert seid, ihr Angestellten," erklärt ihm den Fall Herr Mörschel. "Weil kein Zusammenhang ist bei euch, keine Solidarität. Darum machen sie mit euch, was sie wollen."[6]

Herr Mörschel further casts aspersions on the lower middle class because of their assumption that they were superior to the workers: "'Angestellter, wenn ich so was höre,' sagt Mörschel. 'Ihr denkt, ihr seid was Besseres als wir Arbeiter.'"[7] Pinneberg denies this, but he does admit to having a different attitude to life, in effect to having bourgeois aspirations: "'Es geht doch nicht nur ums Geld,' sagt Pinneberg. 'Wir denken doch auch anders als die meisten Arbeiter, wir haben doch andere Bedürfnisse...'"[8] Whilst Pinneberg's words might not indicate a feeling of superiority on his part, they do betray the fact that the Angestellten could not identify themselves with the Arbeiter, a fact which is well-documented in Kracauer's study.[9] Unable to organize their own defence, they could not turn to a better organized section of the community to seek help and guidance there.

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[6]Hans Fallada, Kleiner Mann, was nun? (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1965), pp. 14-15.

[7]Kleiner Mann, p. 15.

[8]Kleiner Mann, p. 15.

[9]Die Angestellten, pp. 109-116.

It must be mentioned at this point that there was not complete unanimity amongst the members of the working class either. Angry words exchanged between Mörschel and his son indicate this:

> "Was heißt siehst du," sagt Karl gallig zu seinem Vater. "Ein richtiger Bourgeois ist mir noch immer lieber als ihr Sozialfaschisten."
> "Sozialfaschisten," antwortet der Alte böse. "Wer wohl Faschist ist, du Sowjetjünger!"
> "Na klar," sagt Karl, "ihr Panzerkreuzerhelden..."[10]

However, although there may have been a certain amount of dissension amongst certain groups formed within the working class, nevertheless each group had the strength of conviction to be able to choose a political party, and each group enjoyed solidarity within itself.

Pinneberg's own political uncertainty, typical of the attitude of the Angestellten in general, is revealed in a conversation with Lämmchen:

> "Natürlich werden sie was erleben," sagt Pinneberg. "Die meisten bei uns sind ja auch schon Nazis."
> "Danke!" sagt Lämmchen. "Ich weiß, was wir wählen."
> "Na -- und was? Kommunisten?"
> "Natürlich."
> "Das wollen wir uns noch mal überlegen," sagt Pinneberg. "Ich möchte ja auch immer, aber dann bringe ich es doch nicht fertig. Vorläufig haben wir ja noch eine Stellung, da ist es ja noch nicht nötig."[11]

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[10] Kleiner Mann, p. 16.

[11] Kleiner Mann, p. 132.

Again Pinneberg's indecision is seen in relief against the decisiveness of Lämmchen, the daughter of working class parents. There are also ample instances in Kleiner Mann of the lack of solidarity amongst members of the petit-bourgeoisie.

When Pinneberg and his two colleagues are threatened with dismissal by Kleinholz, Pinneberg puts into action a scheme whereby the three employees would cooperate to outwit Kleinholz, a scheme originally conceived by Lämmchen, who, as the daughter of a working class citizen, was used to the concept of the solidarity of fellow workers. What held true for the working class did not, however, necessarily apply to the petit-bourgeoisie. When Lämmchen complains that Pinneberg should have exposed the dishonesty of his colleague Schulz, Pinneberg replies: "So was tut man doch nicht unter Kollegen, Lämmchen,"[12] showing that he did have some instinct for ethical behaviour between colleagues. When he feels directly threatened, however, his resolve to honour the agreement with Lauterbach and Schulz weakens; his confusion and indecision are reflected in the halting and questioning phrases of his thoughts: "Was soll ich nur tun --? Ich kann doch nicht...: Und die andern würden es bestimmt nicht machen! Also --? Aber ich will nicht lumpig sein, ich will mich nicht vor mir schämen müssen! -- Wenn doch Lämmchen da wäre! Wenn ich die fragen könnte!"[13]

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[12] Kleiner Mann, p. 59.

[13] Kleiner Mann, p. 65.

Finally not only Lauterbach and Schulz dissociate themselves from the scheme at the critical moment, but Pinneberg too is ready to desert his companions, in order to save himself:

> Er schaut auf, wie vom Donner gerührt: "Und ich Ochse habe mit den anderen ehrenwörtlich ausgemacht, daß wir kündigen: wenn einer von uns gekündigt wird. Und ich habe das selber angestiftet, ich Idiot, ich Hornvieh! Ich denke doch gar nicht daran. Der schmeißt uns ja einfach alle drei raus!"[14]

This attempt at solidarity and at carrying out an organized plan turns out to be ineffectual and of short duration, proving Mörschel's scepticism about the white collar worker to be well-founded. The fact that their plan fails because they do not have the mutual trust and confidence to carry it through is indicative of the state of the petit-bourgeoisie in general. The inability of the small man to act in cooperation with his peers makes him weak in his confrontations with society.

A natural progression of this situation is that passive non-cooperation should develop into actual antagonism between fellow workers. Evidence of this is provided by some of Pinneberg's colleagues at Mandel's store. As the employees are obliged to work under the psychological strain of the quota system, the atmosphere of backbiting and antagonism grows. Rather than collaborating to alleviate matters with

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[14] Kleiner Mann, p. 65.

mutual support, each individual engages in a bitter struggle for survival, which often involves self-assertion to the detriment of his colleagues. In the following scene between Keßler and Pinneberg Keßler says:

> "Oh, ich bin fertig für diesen Monat. Deswegen frage ich Sie ja gerade. Ich wollte Ihnen was anbieten."
>
> Pinneberg steht still. Er haßt diesen Mann Keßler, diesen kriecherischen, angeberischen Mann. Er haßt ihn so sehr, daß er selbst jetzt kein Wort an ihn richten kann, keine Bitte aussprechen mag. Er sagt, nach langer Pause: "Na, da sind Sie ja fein raus."
>
> "Ja, ich brauche mich nicht mehr abzustrampeln. Ich brauch gar nichts zu verkaufen, diese zwei Tage," sagt Keßler stolz und sieht Pinneberg überlegen an.
>
> Und vielleicht, vielleicht hätte Pinneberg nun doch den Mund aufgetan und eine Bitte ausgesprochen, aber da geschieht es, daß ein Herr auf die beiden zugegangen kommt!
>
> "Würden Sie mir vielleicht ein Hausjakett zeigen? Etwas recht Warmes, Praktisches. Der Preis ist nicht so wichtig. Aber vor allem diskrete Farben."
>
> Der ältere Herr hat die beiden Verkäufer angesehen, und Pinneberg meint sogar, ihn ganz besonders. Darum sagt er: "Bitte schön, wenn Sie..."
>
> Aber Kollege Keßler fährt dazwischen: "Ich bitte sehr, mein Herr, wenn Sie sich dorthin bemühen wollen... Wir haben ausgezeichnete Hausjaketts in Flauschstoffen, ganz gedeckte, diskrete Muster. Bitte sehr..." Pinneberg sieht den beiden nach, er denkt, "Also Keßler ist fertig und nimmt mir den Kunden weg. Dreißig Mark wären es doch gewesen, Keßler..."[15]

This action on the part of Keßler can be regarded as an instance of particular spitefulness. All the employees

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[15] Kleiner Mann, p. 216.

at Mandel's had, however, reacted in a similar way to the news of the quota system; all were ready to exploit each other:

> Unter der Devise "Rette sich wer kann!" setzte ein allgemeiner Sturm auf die KÄufer ein, und mancher Kunde des Warenhauses Mandel war etwas verwundert, wenn er, durch die Herrenkonfektion wandelnd, überall blasse, freundlich verzerrte Gesichter auftauchen sah: "Bitte, mein Herr, wollen Sie nicht --?"
>
> Es Ähnelte stark einem Bordellgäßchen, und jeder VerkÄufer frohlockte, wenn er dem Kollegen einen Kunden weggeschnappt hatte.
>
> Pinneberg konnte sich nicht ausschließen, Pinneberg mußte mitmachen.[16]

The employees regarded their working lives as a rat-race in which only the fittest, or rather the most unscrupulous, could survive. The methods used by the employers served only to undermine the already minimal feelings of solidarity amongst this section of the working populace.

We can see already that the attitudes of the employers and those of the employees combined to form a vicious circle. Given the lack of organization of the lower middle class citizens, which prevents them from fighting the system imposed on them, that same system further alienates the petit-bourgeois from each other, by making the individual's life such a struggle for survival that he cannot clearly see the advantage of cooperating with his peers, that he has no time for altruistic thoughts. In other words: the

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[16] Kleiner Mann, p. 138.

petit-bourgeois cannot fight the system, because they have no solidarity, whilst their very chances of achieving such solidarity are severely undermined by the system.

The final blow of antagonism on the part of Pinneberg's peers is dealt by the officials he meets in the insurance company and similarly at the Labour Exchange. The pitiless, unsympathetic attitude of the latter, reflected in the way that Pinneberg has to run "von Pontius zu Pilatus"[17], shows that they do not regard Pinneberg as an equal, but rather deem themselves above him and presume to sit in judgement on him. This reminds us of the feelings of superiority that Kracauer attributed to the Angestellten. This aspect of the lower middle class mentality is illustrated more clearly with reference to Pinneberg's visit to the insurance company. Overawed by the impressiveness and majesty of the building he enters, he comforts himself with the thought that he is dealing with his peers, with fellow Angestellten: "Ein Trost für Pinneberg, daß hinter der Barre Angestellte wie er sitzen, Kollegen gewissermaßen. Sonst könnte er ja ganz verzagt werden inmitten dieser edlen Hölzer und Steine."[18] However, if Pinneberg expected help and sympathy from his peers, who should have understood his difficulties, he was to be disappointed. The arrogance of the white collar worker, who feels himself to be in a stronger position

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[17] Kleiner Mann, p. 232.

[18] Kleiner Mann, p. 174.

than the person he is dealing with, comes into evidence, and Pinneberg is treated in an offhand and totally disinterested fashion. Fallada stresses this phenomenon by playing on the fact that Pinneberg's "colleague" is sitting behind a rail, which constitutes a physical barrier between himself and his client: "Ein junger Mann sitzt da, beruhigend offen, nicht abgesperrt, nur an der anderen Seite der Barre"[19], and again later: "Aber beide sind Feinde, Todfeinde, denn einer sitzt hinter der Barriere und der andere steht davor. Der eine will, was er für sein Recht hält, aber der andere hält es für eine Belästigung."[20] The barrier is obviously not just of a physical nature but of psychological import too, reflecting symbolically the attitude of the petit-bourgeois towards each other. Because the young man is behind the barrier, and so feels that he can wield a certain amount of power over Pinneberg, he cannot identify himself with his client, and so he does not treat him with the respect due to an equal.

Kleiner Mann deals specifically with the life of an Angestellter, but in the other novels too we find similar examples of the traits that have just been discussed. The saying that there is no honour amongst thieves holds true for the section of the community that Willi Kufalt represents.

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[19] Kleiner Mann, p. 174.

[20] Kleiner Mann, p. 175.

Here the oft-repeated catchphrase "Kippe oder Lampen" reflects the prisoner's readiness to betray his fellow inmates, if it should be to his advantage to do so. This attitude, however, also follows the ex-convict beyond the confines of the prison walls, where indeed he finds that his attempts to form any sort of cooperative body with his own kind are doomed to fail, mainly because of a mutual lack of trust and moral support. Each is most concerned about his own gain, even to the detriment of the group, and so inevitably to his own detriment too.

After forming an address writing business of their own in the Cito-Presto venture, the group members are quick to disband, when faced with difficulties. It is only because of their weakness and lack of solidarity that Marcetus and Seidenzopf, as representatives of the authorities, are able to exercise so much influence over them. Kufalt's "colleagues" resent being subjected to them, feeling that they are exploited by them, but it is their own lack of solidarity that makes them such easy prey for these people and the system they represent.

From this discussion of the "small man's" relationship with his peers in the working world it becomes obvious that the lack of altruism already discussed was not restricted to the elements of society that had some power over the lower middle class. Amongst the members of this class, too, there is a pronounced waning of humanistic ideals, be

this caused by the hardships imposed on them or by the unfortunate tendency of the petit-bourgeois to ignore the possibilities of long-term developments, to put his own personal interests and immediate needs before the interests of the community.

Pinneberg's thoughts in a moment of panic reflect the only area of life where Fallada could still see hope and comfort for the ordinary man: "Wenn doch Lämmchen da wäre! Wenn ich die fragen könnte!"[21] Lacking support from his fellow workers, swimming in indecision himself, he must turn to someone in his private life for help and encouragement. This is, however, very much a reflection of Fallada's own situation at the time of writing Kleiner Mann, because he had just then found moral support himself in the form of his wife Suse.

The family is not always a haven in Fallada's works, as Ruth Römer points out: "Die familienzerstörenden Einflüsse des Kapitalismus sind in Bauern, Bonzen und Bomben ganz klar dargestellt. In guten Zeiten ist Tredup ein guter Familienvater, in schlechten ein schlechter."[22]

The attitude of critics towards the "idyllic" ending of Kleiner Mann has been a divided one. Some see it as a

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[21] Kleiner Mann, p. 65.

[22] "Dichter des kleinbürgerlichen Verfalls. Vor zehn Jahren starb Hans Fallada," Neue deutsche Literatur, V (1957), 123.

great tribute of Fallada's to the power of family love, that can triumph over all ills. Others see it as an ineffective solution to those ills, as an escapist element, as an indication that Fallada himself did not know the answer to the question "was nun?", and that he therefore shrank away from the ultimate conclusion, the final destruction of the "little man," by painting an idyllic picture of a family life to which the troubled "little man" could take refuge. However, especially in view of the fact that Fallada himself did receive this kind of moral support, we can say that he was in fact not offering a <u>solution</u> to the problems of the day: Fallada was not an <u>interpreter</u> of events, he simply described life as he saw it. That marriage and a family life are not to be regarded as an answer to the "little man's" problems is evident, when one bears in mind the fact that Pinneberg's troubles really only started <u>after</u> he got married at the beginning of the novel, and so his family responsibilities in fact made his life in the first instance harder and not easier. In the final instance, however, animal warmth is the only thing that the "little man" has not been robbed of, that the decline of humanitarianism has left untouched. The return to the family hearth does not solve the problems of everyday life, but it certainly remains the only comforting element in an otherwise hard existence.

CONCLUSION

H.J. Schueler calls Fallada a humanist, because he shows such obvious sympathy with the plight of the "little man".[1] Be that as it may, however, Fallada demonstrates in his novels the lack of humanistic endeavour in the life of these people, both on their own part and on the part of those in authority over them.

The willingness of society to exploit these people, combined with their own lack of solidarity, served for some decades only to make life a mere struggle for existence without the hope of developing any better system; the cooperation which would have been necessary for this was simply missing. As everyone concentrated on his own personal gain, to the exclusion of any higher and more far-sighted goals, only ruthlessness and ill-will could grow, sustained by the desperate neediness of the times. Fallada, offering no solution and outlining no possible future development of a more hopeful nature, shows the dearth of humanistic inclinations, the decline of altruism in the lives of the petit-bourgeois in Germany, affecting all who were involved with this class, especially in the years between the two World Wars.

Other German authors before Fallada have criticized the social mores of their time too. Georg Büchner's Woyzeck was a plea for a more humane treatment of the lower

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[1] Hans Fallada: Humanist and Social Critic (The Hague, Paris: Mouton, 1970), pp. 116-117.

class in the three class society he presented; Thomas Mann comes to mind as the poet of bourgeois society (Bürgertum), and the chronicler of its decline, but it is Hans Fallada who portrayed the section of the community that belonged to neither of these classes, the lower middle class, and indeed portrayed them in such a way that the "small man" could identify himself with the characters in the novels. Hans Fallada wrote of the petit-bourgeois for the petit-bourgeois, and left for us a documentation of the plight these people suffered in the first half of the twentieth century.

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